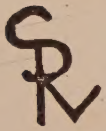
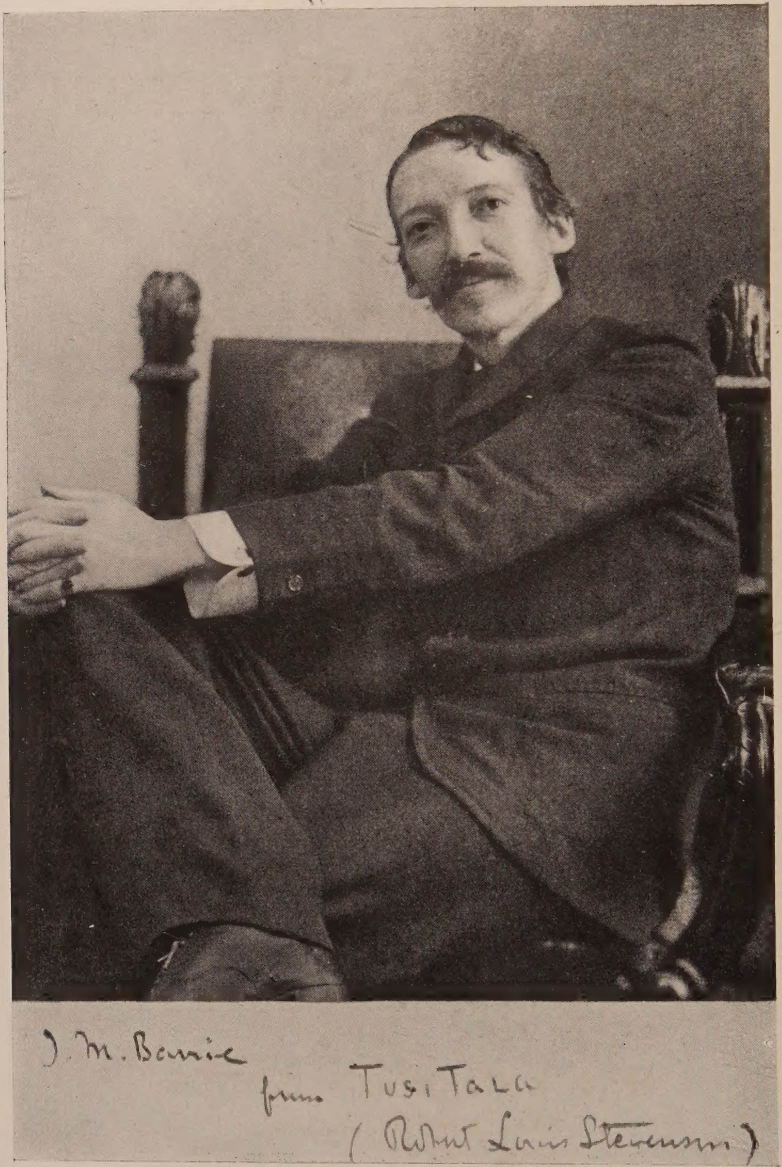
To Imá
From her father in law
on the anniversary of our
respective birth-day 5 November
1922

Ivan



'. . . I tried to get a monogram for myself. . . . Amongst the unsuccessful this was thought to be a success.'

(From an unpublished letter of R. L. S.)



J. M. Barrie
from Tusitala
(Robert Louis Stevenson)

From a photograph taken in 1890 at Sydney.

Front. (Lent by Sir James M. Barrie, O.M.)

I CAN REMEMBER
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

EDITED BY
ROSALINE MASSON

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PREFACE.

IN November 1921, after the Anniversary Dinner, held in Edinburgh, of our Robert Louis Stevenson Club, and all the talk of Stevenson that preceded and followed that brilliant occasion, I realised that there were in Edinburgh not only many Stevenson lovers in the literary sense, but also men and women who could personally remember Stevenson as boy and man. And it occurred to me that in the same way there were men and women in other parts of the world who could remember him in the later chapters of his life, and if such a collection of living memories of the dead writer could be gathered, they would not only be a valuable asset to the biographical literature of our day, but would serve to draw together the literary sympathies of Stevenson lovers all the world over.

On the one hand, there was this untapped source of vivid and personal information, and on the other hand,—to use Stevenson's own words about another Edinburgh scheme, of his day,—'something fell to be done' to set our Club on a really literary footing.

With these thoughts in my mind, I suggested the idea of the Book to a meeting of The Robert Louis Stevenson Club Executive, which approved of it, and appointed a Book Sub-Committee,—Mr King Gillies, B.A., Mr Charles Guthrie, Mr Dods Hogg, Mr John H. Lorimer, R.S.A., Mr Laing Waugh, and myself (convener). We were fortunate in securing the sympathetic interest in our project of the Firm of W. and R. Chambers, by whom the book is published.

The large and cordial response which came in reply to my editorial letters requesting contributions was a delightful encouragement. My first thanks are due to all these contributors who thus materialised the idea, by sending their personal memories to form this combined tribute from so many,—relatives, intimate friends, chance acquaintances, schoolfellows, companions of early years, comrades of later days,—all of whom can say 'I Can Remember Robert Louis Stevenson.'

During the whole of this last year these contributions have been arriving, from Scotland and England, from Australia and America and the South Seas, each one giving some fresh, intimate, living glimpse of Stevenson, or throwing a flash-light on some otherwise forgotten moment of his life, or re-capturing some impression once received of him. And, as they have been gradually collected and arranged, these memories of Louis Stevenson, of all sorts and sizes and shapes and colours, have formed themselves into a kind of biographical mosaic, depicting very clearly the character and life-story of the man. Or, to use another metaphor, they have seemed like a kind of cinematograph,—a series of sudden pictures flashed on to a screen,—switched off,—but always with the central figure that of R. L. S., 'frail and gallant and slender,' with his magnetic eyes and his indomitable smile.

I am regretfully aware that although nearly three hundred editorial letters of request have been sent, addressed to all who were known to remember Stevenson, or who were thought to possibly remember Stevenson, yet that there must be many more who do remember him and have not been reached. The book is the poorer, and the reading public are the losers; but it is inevitable.

Death has claimed two of the contributors to this book since their contributions were given to it,—Mr Patrick W. Campbell, and Lord Dundas. The death in May 1922 of the Rev. W. E. Clarke, Stevenson's great friend in Samoa, who was with him when he died, has lost to this volume a contribution that would have been one of the most valued. In April 1922 he wrote: '. . . I am much honoured by your invitation to contribute to your forth-coming volume of Robert Louis Stevenson. My most cherished memories are too personal and intimate for publication, and much that I could write will be better written by the abler and distinguished men among your contributors who knew R. L. S. in Samoa. But I shall very gladly add my little sprig of rosemary to the wreath you are preparing . . .'

Of the contributions, more than half belong to the Edinburgh period of Stevenson's life. Many of the writers can remember him in his boyhood,—some from the days when he was a pathetic little man at his earliest schools, or a petted only child at home, or at the grandfather's Manse;—some from his days of casual attendance at the Edinburgh Academy and Edinburgh University, whence so many of his contemporaries have journeyed, by widely different paths, to eminence. Other contributors write of his appearances at the immortal 'Spec', at social gatherings, in the *cul de sac* of his legal career, or at the brilliant theatricals in the Jenkin coterie. Then come the contributions which mark the real beginning of his literary career. Following these are descriptions of life at Grez, of the year in California, and the years spent at Bournemouth. All the other contributions belong entirely to the last chapters of his life, lived in the South Seas.

It will thus be seen that the reminiscences, following the line of Stevenson's life, divide themselves sharply, as did his life, into those that belong to Edinburgh and this Country, and those that belong to America and the South Sea Islands. Perhaps this book, gleaned from both sources, may in some small measure bridge over, to Stevenson lovers here and afar, the chasm that cleaves our knowledge of his life, and aid readers to whom the Edinburgh period is intimate, and readers to whom the Honolulu and Samoan part is intimate, each to realise the other part more clearly, and the Stevenson of each. For indeed not less is Edinburgh—cold, ancient, historic, intellectual, wreathed in mist and traditions, different from Samoa,—sunny, tropical, 'more savage,' primitive, wreathed in red hibiscus flowers,—than is Stevenson the wayward restless youth amid his own people, from Stevenson the penniless, homeless, hungry wanderer, or from Stevenson at the last, the celebrated Man of Letters, honoured, adulated, exiled.

To the Book Sub-Committee, (now the 'Books Sub-Committee'), has been relegated the charge of that one of the objects of The Robert Louis Stevenson Club which is defined in the Constitution as: 'To collect and preserve manuscripts, letters, portraits, and other articles connected with Stevenson; to form a library of the various editions of his works; and to exhibit to the public the collection so formed.'

The proceeds of the sale of *I Can Remember Robert Louis Stevenson* are to be devoted to these purposes, and it is hoped will aid the funds and energies of the Club in literary and educational work such as Stevenson himself would have approved.

The Club Library includes Lord Guthrie's Loan Collection, and has already been enriched by several gifts, notably a copy of that rare treasure, 'The Hanging Judge,' generously presented to the Club this year by Sir Graham Balfour. Other gifts of Stevensoniana have been sent or promised to our Committee, and among the names of such benefactors we have the honour of including that of Sir Sidney Colvin.

It is the hope of the Executive Committee that the house in which Stevenson was born, 8 Howard Place, Edinburgh, now the property of the Club, will, when the Club gains entry next year, become, like the Carlyle House at Chelsea, or the Goethe House at Frankfort, a literary Shrine to which pilgrims from 'a' the airts the wind can blaw' will find their way when they visit Edinburgh.

I should like to thank those to whom I am specially indebted for help in obtaining contributions,—Lady Guthrie, who wrote personally to Mr Robert Catton in Honolulu; Mr Robert Catton, who has been actively sympathetic in the whole project, and has put me into touch with contributors in Hawaii, California, and elsewhere; Mr Arthur J. Ireland, who, knowing of the correspondence, and of the meeting in Red Lion Square, sought and obtained the contribution from Mr Dow; Mrs Hay and Mr John A. Hay, for offering the Club Committee the Lecture by Mrs Hay's brother, the late Rev. Archibald Bisset; Mr Charles Guthrie, not only for obtaining more than one contribution, but for constant help; Mr Dods Hogg, for kind help and valuable suggestions; Professor J. Y. Simpson, for his personal letters to Sheriff Scott Moncrieff and Mr Omond; Mr John Purves, for his personal letter to Mr Thomas Hardy; and Mr A. P. Melville, for writing to Mr Lloyd Osbourne.

I have to accord my thanks and acknowledgments to the following Authors, Editors, and Publishers: W. Green and Son, Ltd., Edinburgh, for permission to reprint extracts from *Robert Louis Stevenson*, by the late Lord Guthrie; Sir Sidney Colvin and Mr Edward Arnold, for permission to quote passages from *Memories and Notes of Persons and Places*, by Sir Sidney Colvin; Mr Lloyd Osbourne, Charles Scribner's Sons, N.Y., and Mr Pawling, of the London Publishing House of William Heinemann, for permission to publish portions of Mr Lloyd Osbourne's Introduction to the Vailima Edition of Stevenson's works; Mrs Van de Grift Sanchez and Charles Scribner's Sons, N.Y., for according right to use portions of *Life of Mrs Robert Louis Stevenson*, by Mrs Van de Grift Sanchez; Messrs Small, Maynard and Company, Boston, for permission to use extracts from *With Stevenson in Samoa*, by H. J. Moors; Mr S. R. Lysaght, for kindly allowing me to reprint his letter to the *Times*, which appeared in December 1919, describing his visit to Stevenson in Samoa; Mr George Lisle and Mr Leonard Huxley, Editor of *Cornhill*, for giving permission to reproduce from *Cornhill* (December 1921) Mr Lisle's article *R. L. S. and Some Savages on an Island*; Mr C. E. S. Chambers, Editor of *Chambers's Journal*, for permission to reprint, from the *Journal* of September 1919, *Stevenson as Playmate*, by 'Lantern Bearer,' and from the *Journal* of October 1922, *Stevenson As I Knew Him in Samoa*, by the Rev. A. E. Claxton; Mr Birge Harrison and Mr Glenn Frank, the Editor of the *Century Magazine*, for permission to reprint from Mr Harrison's article *With Stevenson at Grez*, which appeared in December 1916; the Rev. S. J. Whitmee and Mr Basil Williams, Editor of *Outward Bound*, for permission to reprint from the article *Tusitala*, which appeared in February 1922; Mr William Poustie and Mr C. S. Russell, Editor of the *East Fife Observer*, for permission to reprint from Mr Poustie's article which appeared in January 1922.

I am greatly indebted to Sir J. M. Barrie for lending the photograph with Stevenson's inscription on it, which forms the frontispiece of this volume; to Miss Louisa Mackenzie for lending two photographs of her cousin for reproduction; to Mrs Younger for allowing the reproduction which illustrates her reminiscences of her cousin; to Sir Alfred Ewing for lending for reproduction a photograph taken by the late A. G. Dew Smith, and for the note appended to it; and to Sir Graham Balfour, Stevenson's cousin and biographer, for lending for reproduction his copy of a photograph of Stevenson taken in Sydney.

ROSALINE MASSON.

EDINBURGH:
September, 1922.

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'Smout' in Nursery Days.

(Lent by Miss Louisa Mackenzie.)

I CAN REMEMBER ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Nursery Days, and 'Cummie.'

WALTER B. BLAIKIE, LL.D.

MY acquaintance with Louis began in nursery days. His Mother was a near relative of my Mother's; but the more important link in our connection was Alison Cunningham, since immortalized by R. L. S. as 'Cummie.' Alison was my Nurse from my birth until I was four and a half years old, when she entered the service of Louis's parents, in which service she remained until the final break up by death of the Thomas Stevenson family. There was frequent intercourse between the nurseries, and many games played that were new to us. After the lapse of nearly seventy years my recollections are faint and I cannot recall much, but one incident still remains in my memory. Louis was particularly fond of anything dramatic, and his favourite game in our nursery was to play at Church after the Scottish fashion. One child was minister and stood on a chair-made platform, while below him at floor level sat the 'precentor'—a now almost extinct functionary who in those days led the singing of the congregation. Louis, who was fond of declamation, was generally the minister. Clad in some form of black drapery (probably Alison's cloak) he would preach vigorously. On one occasion he constructed a pair of clerical 'bands,' made of white paper, which were hung round his neck. Now in Scotland bands are only worn by ordained clergymen. They are the outward symbol of the sacred rite of Ordination. While Louis was declaiming, my mother entered the room. She had not minded previous performances, but when she saw the clerical bands her anger was fierce. I remember it to this day. To her the assumption was an act of utter sacrilege. She tore the bands from Louis's neck and prohibited the church game for the future.*

Alison was a very dear woman, very Scots, an innate Covenanter. If I remember aright her forebears were all Covenanters, and Scots people remember their family history. Louis was brought up on covenanting traditions and his first important published paper was 'The Pentland Rising,' a brilliant account of that covenanting disaster. Alison had a perfect horror of anything 'popish'. Once when taken by the family on a continental tour she rather embarrassed her employers by visiting Catholic churches and leaving violent Protestant tracts on the chairs and in the pews; but luckily no harm came of it.

Even to the end she maintained her horror of popery. The old parish church of Colinton—the church of Louis's grandfather—had been reconstructed about twelve years ago and largely rebuilt. She bemoaned the change:—'Don't you think, Mr Walter,' she said to me, 'that it's terribly popish?' I consoled her as best I could, but not very successfully.

In her later days she became very deaf and could only communicate with strangers in writing. She always carried a pencil and note-book for this purpose and became very proficient in this one-sided form of conversation. She was much lionized, chiefly by American visitors who came to visit 'Cummie' and rather gushed over her. It did not seem to turn her head, she seemed more amused and amazed than flattered.

Among other visitors was the Duchess of Sutherland, who was photographed along with her. 'Look at that,

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* In Sir Graham Balfour's *Life of R. L. S.* (Vol. I., p. 37) he quotes an extract from the diary of Louis's Mother. '26th July 1853,—'Smout's favourite occupation is making a church; he makes a pulpit with a chair and a stool; reads sitting, and then stands up and sings, by turns.'—[Ed.]

Mr Walter,' she said, 'fancy me being photographed with a duchess and me sitting while she 's standing.'

Dear old Alison, her end was tragic. Coming down stairs her ankle doubled under her and the bone was broken. She was now ninety-one years old and her agèd frame could not stand the shock. She died a few weeks later;* Lord Guthrie and I and a few relatives laid her in the grave in the Morningside cemetery, Edinburgh.

SIX YEARS OLD.

WILLIAM G. BOSS.

I can remember Robert Louis Stevenson, for I was at Canonmills School with him. The fact of his attendance at this school is not mentioned, as far as I am aware, in any of the published biographies; and it seems right that it should be known that he was a pupil there for a short time about 1857. The headmaster of that school, a beginners' school, had a good reputation for bringing on children. Although I do not remember the master clearly when I was a pupil there, not having been in his class, I remember various incidents, such as how we were taught in the first or lowest class, whose teacher was a woman, to count by means of bright coloured beads strung on wires across a wooden frame. I have a hazy recollection that R. L. S. was also in this class—the infant class. The class-room was in the end of the school building nearest to the public road.

My late elder brother James, who also was a pupil, informed me about twenty years ago, when he was in Glasgow, that the late Stephen Adam, glass-stainer of that city, another pupil at Canonmills, used to speak jocularly about little Stevenson being the butt of the school from the oddity of his appearance. I do not recollect this bantering specially, but think it would be from this treatment by the older boys that Stevenson one day appeared to make a mute appeal to me for sympathy, while I, as a thoughtless boy, was roving and shouting in the playground,—he arrested my attention when I was near the school door, by his solitary appealing posture, with his eyes intently fixed on me, as if he had been watching my proceedings for some time. I stopped suddenly and looked at him for a minute or two, but I regret to say that I did not respond to his apparent appeal for friendship. I turned away and carried on my thoughtless play, and thus I was probably the loser. It is one of those incidents in life which seem to adhere to one, leaving an indelible impression on the memory; our relative positions still being clear in my mental vision, he standing near the gate of the playground, and I standing near the school door. I never pass by the place now without thinking of it.

---

* *July 17th 1913.*

I notice in one biography it is mentioned that Stevenson intended writing a story to be called *Canonmills.* Of course there are great changes in the locality since those early days—the days when little Stevenson knew Canonmills well—the Canonmills of his very earliest schooldays, the Canonmills where, as a very small boy, he so often walked at 'Cummy's' side, 'gaping at the Universe.' In those days there were the mills and granaries opposite the school, with their stores of grain which we tried to reach in to; the mill lade; the Old Coach Inn further up the road; the tannery; the market-garden, where we used to spend our halfpence on fruits in their season; the Coachmen's green at Bellevue, where a travelling menagerie with Tom Thumb and his wife Mrs Thumb was on view for a time; the Zoological Gardens in East Claremont Street, where we saw the monkeys, the strange birds, the bears down in a pit, and got peacocks' feathers to our delight; while the corn was growing in the fields near by, and Blondin walked on the tight-rope high up in the air down at Inverleith Row, and the miller's horses toiled zigzag-ways up the hill with their loads of flour on sled-carts for the city, and Jooky Reid at Bellevue chased us boys, would-be plunderers, away from his garden.

MEMORIES.

JAMES MILNE.

THE earliest I recollect of R. L. S. is his mother running him along Heriot Row in the mornings to warm him up on his way to Henderson's School in India Street, where we both went.

I also vividly recollect him one day in the Academy Yards in a towering rage. Some of the other kiddies were ragging him, and the rim of his straw hat was torn down and hanging in rings round his face and shoulders.

He always came to our children's parties, and my sisters and I went to Heriot Row on the two or three occasions there was a children's party there.

I well recollect R. L. S. at Peebles one day. Five or six of us were bathing in the Duckats, a rocky pool below Neidpath. It was a sunny day with a cold wind, and we did not waste much time in getting our clothes on; but Louis would continue to run about and play the fool in a state of nudity after all the rest of us were dressed.

At the University he and I belonged to the Dialectic Society the same year. It used to meet at eight or nine P.M., and often continue till eleven or twelve. When Stevenson turned up he always had something to say, and his remarks were always so very far from the mark that he provided material for all the later speakers to rag him. He usually bolted as soon as he had done speaking.

I never saw much of him at Colinton Farm; occasionally he came to our house, and frequently my wife and I were at Swanston while the Stevensons were living there; but I have no outstanding recollections of him at Swanston—indeed I doubt if he often was there when we were.

We have an unpublished novelette of his, which he dashed off one wet Saturday when he was staying at Colinton Farm, or spending the day there. It is a very weird tale of the time of the plague in Edinburgh—thoroughly Stevensonian, written closely on both sides of seven or eight half-sheets of paper all different sizes. He made no corrections, and it requires none. He must have been about fourteen when he wrote it, and tossed it to my wife, who was a favourite cousin. She always kept it among her treasures.

The last time I saw Stevenson was at Heriot Row, when my wife and I went there to lunch and to say good-bye before he left for the South Seas. He could not come down to lunch, so I went and saw him in bed. He looked very frail and far through.

Fresh Side-lights on R. L. S.

MRS DALE.

MY first recollection of Robert Louis Stevenson is of when he was eight or nine years old, and was one of a little tea-party of cousins, given by my mother at Grange Road after we came home from India. We played a game called 'mesmerism,' in which he was the victim. He was asked to keep his eyes fixed on the 'mesmerist,' who made crosses and symbols on his own face, always touching before he did so the bottom of a 'magic' plate he held in his hand. R. L. S., sitting opposite with eyes watching the 'magician's' keenly, and full of the idea of being 'mesmerised,' did not notice the smiles around, nor know that the underside of his own plate had been blackened over a lamp, and therefore that his face was being grotesquely streaked by himself in following out the movements of the hand he was watching, whose every action he had been warned to copy faithfully. So, when he was held up to a mirror, and realised that he had been 'taken in,' he clapped his hands over his face for shame, and all evening I think he felt lowered in his own estimation at having been made to look ridiculous.

I do not think many people can now be alive who remember the Manse of Colinton as I do, when old Dr Balfour was there. He was R. L. S.'s grandfather, and my uncle by marriage, Mrs Balfour being the eldest child, and my father almost the youngest, of the large family of the Rev. Dr Smith of Galston Manse, Ayrshire. Robert Burns had been reproved by Dr Smith, and Burns had retaliated by pillorying Dr Smith twice, by name, in the 'Holy Fair,' where he says 'his English tongue and gesture fine are a' clean oot o' season.' The 'English tongue' must have come from Dr Smith's grandmother, R. L. S.'s great-great-great-grandmother, who was Miss Jane Watson of Malton Priory, Yorkshire, and Bilton Hall, near Harrogate. When her son paid a first visit to her old home of Bilton, an old letter says 'orders were given that the best buck in the park was to be killed in his honour.' In my home I have copies in oil of that old lady and her husband, the originals of which, I believe, are by Sir Peter Lely, and are still in the family.

At Colinton Manse entrance the strong wooden gates are still peppered with shot-holes from being used as a target in those far-off days. R. L. S. was a year older than I, and most of the contemporary Balfour playmates were still older, so they always seemed my cousins, though I really belonged to the older generation, who were gray-haïred while I was yet a child. I think all the Balfour sons had a 'Lewis' in the family, named after the Colinton Manse grandfather, and each had a distinctive adjunct, generally from their birthplace. There were 'Delhi' Lewis, 'Noona' Lewis, 'Cramond' Lewis, Lewis Charles, and Robert Louis.

When staying at Colinton Manse as a child, I can remember old Dr Balfour, with long silvery hair, and a beautiful face, reading prayers of a morning at a small round table beside one of the two windows of what was then the dining-room and is now the Manse kitchen. Outside in the garden is still the old yew-tree, under which R. L. S. used to love to hide and put his ear against the wall which divides the garden from the graveyard, declaring he heard 'the spirits of the departed' speaking to him. There used to be flower-beds, over which, out of pure impishness, R. L. S. *would* run, and then carefully make his small footmarks into larger ones, so that an *older* cousin, Mina Balfour, should be thought the culprit; not, I think, that he dreaded blame, but merely that his ever-active brain effervesced and needed an outlet. He was always a delicate child, and 'Auntie' used to tell of a trying walk that she took with him, as a little boy, one wintry day from Howard Place to Danube Street, to pay a visit to an old aunt there, and how R. L. S. wanted to sit down on every flight of steps on the way as they came to it. Visits to Swanston Cottage, later on, used to be very pleasant—a simple life in snug, sunny rooms.

As a young man R. L. S. did not care to go to dances; but I remember driving with him in their nice carriage and pair, from 17 Heriot Row, one lovely evening all the way to Portobello, to a dance given by a Stevenson aunt and cousins, who were then living there for a time. The drive to and fro was very enjoyable, but at the party I think R. L. S. did not dance at all, but stood in corners chatting. He and his special friends seemed to act on one another like flint and tinder, if in a sparkling mood.

Those Stevenson cousins of R. L. S.'s had been brought up in France, and were accomplished skaters, so as there was a long spell of frost that winter we used to meet daily on Duddingston Loch, where Bob Stevenson—R. L. S.'s chief friend—used to do figure-skating beautifully, and looked very picturesque with a heavy crimson silken sash round his waist, and wearing, I think, a velvet jacket. Perhaps R. L. S. was struck by the effect, and adopted it, for he also, on 'the Inland Voyage,' wore a crimson sash; and a velvet coat certainly was his favourite attire later on.

At my marriage, in 1871, R. L. S. made *the* speech of the occasion in returning thanks for the bridesmaids, and was in very happy form. A few evenings before, at 17 Heriot Row, I had been singing Milton's *l'Allegro*, set to music, with R. L. S. turning over my pages, and he said later on, 'Those words "jocund rebecks sound" ring in my head persistently.' A phrase or word often did with him. R. L. S. was fond of music; but the Balfours in general knew little about it.

It was a letter from me, R. L. S. said, that made him write *The Wreckers*. We used to have a great many wrecks, fifty years ago, on the coast beside my home at Scoughall, before Barns Ness, the Bass, and Fidra lighthouses were built, and I had described one of these wrecks, when many poor fellows were drowned. My husband was first officer of a volunteer rocket apparatus there, and when the tide went back, crowds of men with lanterns searched the rocks for bodies. Sometimes a call would be given that something suspicious appeared to be in a large, dark pool, and all the lanterns would be seen hurrying over the black rocks to the spot, and then the lights were held down all round while they searched among the seaweed. My husband said it was a most weird scene, and like olden times, when 'the Pagans of Scoughall' had the worst of reputations;—they were said to tie a horse's neck to its knee and attach a lantern to the rope, and then drive the horse slowly along the cliffs, so that a vessel out at sea should think it a ship riding at anchor, and come in, only to be wrecked on our rocks and plundered by the ghoulish people.

R. L. S. speaks in *Catriona* of the 'lights of Scoughall' as seen from the Bass Rock; but it can only be from the very top of the island that they can be seen. However, he purposely put 'Tam Dale' in charge of the prisoners there, saying the name should be associated with those parts; and when I said he need not have made my husband a jailor, the reply was: 'Oh, it was two hundred years ago!'

When R. L. S. wrote home to his parents that he and Fanny were to be married in California, he described her as being 'a first-rate nurse, cook, and general manager'; and his mother said to me, 'I should have liked him to tell me a little more than that, and doubtless she is not the daughter-in-law I have always pictured to myself; but I shall hope to feel always now that Lou is being well cared for.' She was truly the most gracious and affectionate of mothers-in-law. When, in after years, she lived with her son and daughter-in-law in Samoa, her duty was to take charge of the books, and an onerous one it was, for certain insects would weave a sticky substance across the leaves from board to board, others made holes through the book from cover to cover, and another variety devoured the books themselves.

I have bunches of most lovely pink-and-white flowers (not quite so large as before I lent them, with other curios, to an exhibition in Edinburgh!) made of natural fish-scales of beautiful lustre, brought home by Mrs Stevenson from Samoa. She told me that, boating in the lagoons, you look down through the clear water and see scarlet, pink, gold, or pure white fish swimming in and out of the coral reefs.

I remember being much amused by a description R. L. S.'s mother gave me of their triumphal progress when paying a formal visit to one of the two rival kings in Samoa. Mrs Stevenson's widow's cap was always the centre of admiration with all the islanders, and was specially begged for if she was going to any entertainment. This occasion was, I think, when Lady Jersey was taken by Louis Stevenson to visit the court of the rebel king Mataafa, going as 'Miss Amelia Balfour,' for, being the wife of the Governor of New South Wales, she could not go openly. All of them were much amused at finding the Samoan in charge of the escort trotting along complacently in front of them with a discarded widow's cap on his head, the white streamers floating over his bare, black shoulders.

Those widow's caps, Mrs Stevenson said, might well be made much of, for they simply cost a fortune to reach Samoa in fresh, dainty condition. Once, when going to visit the other rival Samoan king, the boat in which they had to cross a stretch of water was rocking so, that Mrs Stevenson subsided quietly on to the nearest seat. 'Do you know you are sitting on your new cap?' one of the party asked her. 'Why yes, of course; but what else could I do?' she replied. 'That proves what an accomplished traveller you are, when you can do it so smilingly,' she was told. She was always sweet and charming, and with such a gracious manner that I have heard her called 'the angel of the family.'

None of Mrs Stevenson's photographs do her justice, for she was very pretty, graceful, and refined-looking. She had an album full of photographs of R. L. S. at all stages of his life, which she said were those of her 'large family.' This she probably took to Vailima with her when she broke up her home in Edinburgh, and sent the furniture out to Samoa, including family portraits—one, I know, being by Raeburn. It might seem that the leather-seated, stuffed dining-room furniture would not be suitable for a hot climate; but the hall where it was placed was large and cool and airy.

I had the great pleasure of reading all Mrs Stevenson's weekly letters from Samoa, which her sister Jane, who was 'Auntie' Balfour to the whole connection, sent on to me first for perusal, and I then forwarded the budget to another of the circle of readers. Those letters are now published in book-form, and are very interesting; but they seemed even more so in her pretty handwriting.

Very many years ago R. L. S. told me I should 'write a book,' so it seems strange, and gives me a somewhat melancholy satisfaction, to feel that my first attempt at anything of the sort should be these casual reminiscences of R. L. S. himself.

MEMORIES.

MRS KATHERINE DE MATTOS.

I am always a little loath to write of intimate friends and personal matters. But as you so kindly invite me to say what I can of my great friend and first cousin, the now celebrated 'R. L. S.,' I must try to say something—hardly more perhaps than a few words. My knowledge of him, though long and deep, cannot be conveyed by words.

My first recoverable memory is trivial enough—a wedding of long long ago, where, or whose wedding, I know not; nor why he, a young boy, and I, a yet younger child, were chosen as guests. I see now, as in those far-off years, two old people being married, looking to me like a pair of ancient yellow idols I must have seen in some picture-book. No other children appear to me to have been present, besides R. L. S. and myself, except one—a solid, stolid boy in a kilt, placed on one side of me, with R. L. S. himself on the other, at a long breakfast-table. The kilted boy, no laugher himself, may have been the cause of laughter in his neighbours. Presently a few men, young and old, came over to us (as the eating and drinking waned), perhaps attracted by our merriment. What, I wonder now, can R. L. S. have said or looked to cause them to linger with us children? In later years I came to know how often things of the sort happened in his company.

Another memory is of North Berwick, the long twilights on its 'sands,' the glen and the burn running down it to the sea, with Louis there too, and his great companion, my only brother R. A. M. Stevenson. No other men nor other women were ever quite to me what these two were and remained.

When still a child, I went to live in France for a while, and saw R. L. S. seldomer. Then followed London days, with other sights and other people; but still with those two at hand. Their brilliant talk of things seen or unseen, grave or gay, the sudden gusts of laughter and sheer absurdities, still echo in my ears. Both were prodigal talkers; but for all that, Louis worked steadily and definitely towards his object, with brain and pen and wide-open, lamp-like eyes. Still later he and I, with my baby daughter, travelled in France to many places. When he started on his journey 'with a Donkey' we were there. Afterwards we were often together in places in England. It was at Bournemouth he one morning told me of a dream which crystallised into his *Jekyll and Hyde*. This book, dedicated to me, with verses and a letter in his own writing, is in the presentation copy still in my possession. Our long alliance was broken for ever by his departure for the South Seas; but while I live my memories of him live too.

AT SCHOOL AND COLLEGE IN EDINBURGH IN THE DAYS OF R. L. S.

THE LATE PATRICK W. CAMPBELL, W.S.

From a Lecture delivered to the Robert Louis Club on 8th February 1921.

IT was in the early days of October 1861 that I first saw the city of Edinburgh, having been sent from the country to join the youngest class at the Edinburgh Academy. I found there were upwards of sixty boys in that class, most of them born in 1850, and among them was Robert Lewis Balfour Stevenson, besides two other Lewis Balfours, also grandsons of the minister of Colinton whose name they bore. The Master, who had been reared as a Blue-coat-School-boy in London, was D'Arcy Thompson, one of the most delightful of men, father of the present Professor D'Arcy Thompson of Dundee and St Andrews. . . .

During one of the summers which Stevenson spent at Peebles as a boy he fought a duel with another Academy boy, younger than himself, Bobby Romanes, whose father lived at Craigerne. They had real pistols and real powder, but no real bullets—not even a charge of red-currant jelly to add to the apparent tragedy of the encounter. No doubt Stevenson enjoyed this mimic warfare, and I was talking a few days ago to another boy who was a witness of it. . . .

The golden thread which runs through the life of Stevenson, and makes men bow in admiration in his presence, was his fight with fate; the man's unconquerable soul. As his friend Henley expresses it, 'My head is bloody but unbowed.' This fight, in Stevenson's case, began in the nursery in Heriot Row when, in the long and sleepless nights, Cummy's comfortable hand was placed in his. Together they read *The Pilgrim's Progress* and the *Life of Robert Murray MacCheyne*—the young Scottish clergyman who died at, I think, the early age of twenty-eight, and whose biography was then to be found in so many Scottish homes. . . .

Last November I received a message from Edinburgh's great preacher, the late Dr Alexander Whyte, to say that it was my telling him of Stevenson's writings that had led to his reading them. I was not aware of this at all. No man had a keener eye for good writing than Dr Whyte, and his interest had been aroused because I told him in those far-off days that R. L. S. had a style worthy of Charles Lamb. I remember that once when I was at dinner at a friend's house, where Mr and Mrs Thomas Stevenson were dining also, the host after dinner brought up Alexander Whyte, then a young clergyman, to introduce him to Thomas Stevenson, and I can never forget the astonishment of the father when he heard the unstinted praises of his son from the lips of a serious-minded young clergyman, and the look of incredulity with which he listened to it all. Once, in later years, Dr Whyte said to me: 'But why, man, did you not see more of Louis Stevenson when you were at the University with him?' I told him in reply that I was not at all keen to see much of him, still less of the friends who surrounded him. We are, perhaps fortunately, not all cast in the same mould.

The story of *John Nicolson* perhaps takes you as fully as anything Stevenson has written into the atmosphere of himself and his friends in their University days. . . .

I remember an amusing incident, when Stevenson and another friend of ours were taken up for snowballing, and led off to the police-office along the South Bridge and up the High Street. Stevenson, in talking over the incident later, said: 'As long as we were in the Bridges I felt ashamed of myself, but so soon as we wheeled round and were marching up the High Street I realised that I was a hero.' . . .

The University career of R. L. S. brings us to the least interesting and the most unsatisfactory period of his whole life. It was a time of revolt, a time of the green-sickness of immaturity.

Of course R. L. S. came out of the mentally troubled times of his youth at an early stage. He soon realised what he owed to his father, a man who may fittingly be described as 'quaint and devout,' and devoted to the best interests of his son. That R. L. S. neglected his classes at the University was not indeed a serious matter for him. He was an only child, and need never want though he had idled through life; but what was unrealised then was that he was engaged in a serious work of his own, as his after years soon showed. He was born with the artist's craving for beauty of expression, a beauty only attained with infinite pains. The mass of students, like my friend Mr M'Ewen and myself, knew very well that we should have to earn our own living by the sweat of our brows; that our course at the University was the highest privilege we were ever likely to enjoy before buckling to life's work, and necessity was laid upon us to improve such talents, whether many or few, that we might possess—for the most part we could not afford to mix ourselves up with apparent idlers. Wise men have said that to be thrown upon one's own resources in early life is to be cast into the very lap of fortune; it is only then that a man's faculties undergo a development and display an energy of which they were previously unsusceptible. That was the only sort of good fortune which most of Stevenson's fellow-students possessed, and without which we would, in all probability, have made but a very poor show in life. . . .

I am the owner of the two earliest numbers of the *Edinburgh University Magazine* for January and February 1871, published by Stevenson, which I should perhaps hand over to the Stevenson Club. In No. 2 one of the friends of those days—but not particularly one of Stevenson's intimates—wrote some lines which I have never forgotten, and with which I may fittingly close these somewhat disjointed recollections:

> Not from Jerusalem alone to Heaven the path ascends;
> By many devious ways unknown to unimagined ends,
> The all-wise Father of created things
> Sends forth and guides this strange world's journeyings.

School Memories.

JOHN RAMSAY ANDERSON.

IT is not easy at this distance of time to say much that is definite with regard to my early acquaintance with Robert Louis Stevenson. He and I went to the Edinburgh Academy at the same time, and were in the same class. During our time together at the Academy I never looked upon him as physically strong, and he was often absent on account of health. I have a distinct recollection that in those early days he used to appear in the class in the morning with a scrap of paper, on which he had written some verses—generally of an amusing character—about one of his school-fellows or one of the Masters. When I settled in Edinburgh again, in 1869, I used to come across him from time to time at the University and various other places so long as he remained in Edinburgh. In those days he always struck me as being different from other people, but I little realised what a genius he was to become; but looking back one can see he had this in him from his boyhood. One fact which I well remember is the interest which he took in the Thompson Class Club, which was formed for those who had been in the same class at the Academy. The decision to form a club was made at a meeting in the upper room of a house called 'Rutherfords', in Rose

Street, a place much frequented at that time by apprentices and others for meeting for luncheon. Our meeting was held there one evening when he was present, and he took the greatest interest in the formation of the club. It was arranged that we should have an annual dinner, and on several occasions he was present, and entertained us all with his wit and humour. As I have no doubt is well known, after he left Edinburgh he still kept up an interest in the club and his old class-fellows, and on two occasions when he was unable to be present he sent a poem, which was read at the dinner and afterwards printed, and a copy given to each member of the club. One of these subsequently appeared in one of his volumes of poems, but the other was never included, and the only known publication of it is on three pages of print given to the different members of the club.

MEMORIES.

GEORGE MOODY STUART.

I can remember Robert Louis Stevenson. We frequently came home from the Academy together, walking up Howe Street, he breaking off at Heriot Row, and I going on to Queen Street. My recollections of him are all of his kindly nature—as he showed himself later to all the world. D'Arcy Thompson (I think when he was taking the class through *Tales of a Grandfather*) used at times to ask us which of Scott's novels dealt with the period about which we were reading. Stevenson was always ready with the answer, and I think almost always got up Dux by it—about the only chances he ever had of getting up from his customary place pretty well down in the class.

I, like most of the class, had not then begun to read

Scott. I used to try to remember Stevenson's answers, and brought them out on future occasions, ignorant of whether they suited the occasion! I don't think they ever helped me up.

Stevenson and my brother Alexander were admitted advocates (or should I say called to the Bar?) on the same day—a wretchedly cold day, and the attire in which they had to appear was most unsuited to it. Stevenson was the picture of misery, blue with cold, untidy, and with his tie all awry. When they met before the ceremony, my brother said to him that he looked like a drunken Irishman going to a funeral; and Stevenson, hating to face the ordeal, replied: 'I wish I were that Irishman, *coming from* that funeral!'

MRS FLORENCE A. MACCUNN.

Extract from a Letter.

I need not tell you how gladly and proudly I would have added my stone to the cairn if I had one in my possession. I only remember meeting him twice. The first time was when I was seven, and he came to tea with us at the house we were staying in at Peebles. He was a well-brought-up only child, we were the ordinary products of the unchartered liberty of a big Victorian family. I remember the feeling of contempt I had for a contemporary—he must have been about eleven—who stated that his parents had instituted a system of fines for any slang words he used. He instanced 'to chisel,' meaning to cheat, as on the forbidden list. It was a mild word in our vocabulary.

The only other time I remember meeting him was at the performance of Salvini's *Macbeth*, when we happened to sit together; but I was riveted on the stage, and remember little but the tones of deep delight with which he repeated to himself—but for my benefit!—the words, 'The multitudinous seas incarnadine.'

Considering that my mother was his mother's bridesmaid, and that she dressed the cot for her friend's baby, it was surely sinning our mercies that we never knew him familiarly. But I don't know. In those days I think he appealed more to older people. . . .

Schoolboy Memories.

T. INGLIS, F.R.C.P.(ED.).

WHEN a schoolboy, R. L. S. was a lover of Natural History, and a keen observer. He was called 'Louis' by his *intimes*, never 'Bob' or other name. It was his wont to wander over Blackford Hill, and the more distant Braid and Pentland Hills, with me on Saturdays and holidays, in quest of uncommon wild flowers, birds' eggs, &c. I remember collecting from a scar of Arthur's Seat specimens of the rare *Asplenium Septentrionale* with the aid of a fishing-rod with triangle hook on the point. He had a wonderful flair in recognising birds and finding their nests. I shall never forget his marking a kestrel to its nest near the top of a precipitous cliff, and nothing would please Louis but the taking of it. The place was almost inaccessible, and few Alpine climbers would have attempted it. Taking off his jacket, he began the perilous climb. I did not know then the geological formation of the rock, but the falling here and there of portions of its weather-beaten, friable surface gave me much apprehension. However, he kept steadily on, reached the nest, transferred the eggs to his cap, and then gradually worked his way to the top. One false step or slip, and there would have been no *Treasure Island*. Soon after this I was packed off to school in Switzerland to learn French, and I saw him no more.

Notes of a Few Youthful Recollections of Robert Louis Stevenson.

DAVID M. LEWIS.

MY first definite memory of Stevenson dates from one of his summer holiday visits to North Berwick, in the earlier 'sixties. He was one of ten or twelve Edinburgh boys of from ten to about fourteen years of age who, as holiday companions, were a good deal together. We were all of the usual schoolboy type except Stevenson, whom we always seemed to sense as a little odd in his ideas and interests. We thought him older than he really was, and that to a certain extent coloured our relations with him. We never tried to make fun of him nor thought of taking him into account in connection with active participation in any of our games involving physical activities or emulation. So far as games such as golf, football, &c., were concerned he was 'out of it.' But we always enjoyed a walk with him, especially if it was through the 'Glen,' with its ruins of the old mill buried in the shadowless depths of the ravine running up from the East Links; or along the seashore by the foot of the cliffs facing the Bass to the monumental ruins of Tantallon Castle. Then, if we were lucky, we might hear of how the old mill became a ruin after the murder of the miller, or of the finding of an iron-bound chest by fearful ear-ringed men in a cave beneath Tantallon. Always there was some fresh weirdness in his imaginings of what had happened long ago. The most memorable, however, of my memories of that time is of our secret meetings, at what, for us, was the dead of night, in a small cave or fissure in the rocks at Point Garry. Those were entirely Stevenson's idea, and he ruled over them autocratically.

We had to approach the meeting-place stealthily, one by one; and when we reached it, to produce a lantern. These were generally 'turnip' ones, and by them, 'dimly burning,' the place assumed an aspect in harmony with our talk. I don't think any of us were very imaginative; but it was never long till Stevenson had us back in the days of pirates and smugglers and hidden treasure. So far as my recollection serves the feminine element was never touched on—'Once on board the lugger' was always addressed to a man. Golf of course was our principal game; but I never saw Stevenson even try to play. Nor did he care for other games. I think the only one of our amusements which really interested him was our contests with model yachts. It was Stevenson who suggested the idea of having an Ocean Race, and who umpired the contest, which took place over a course from the harbour to Craigleith, an island about a mile out to sea, a pretty stiff course for model yachts! It was Stevenson also who inspired us with the idea of making a kite of record size, which the first time we flew it lifted one of us off his feet and carried him in the air for about fifty yards.

My next recollection of Stevenson is as a fellow-pupil at a private school in Frederick Street, Edinburgh, kept by Mr Thompson. More than ever, he was not the typical schoolboy. He was quiet, almost aloof, and showed but little interest either in us or his lessons. He looked delicate, and when he left the school I fancy it was on account of his health.

During the time we were fellow-pupils, an hour every Friday afternoon was devoted to the writing of essays on some given subject. In after years I asked Mr Thompson if he had ever noticed in those written by Stevenson anything calling for special remark. 'No,' he replied. 'Except for an occasional striking phrase, they never showed much grasp of, nor interest in, their subject, nor a distinctive literary turn of mind.'

The next, and, alas! practically the last time Stevenson and I were much together was in the last year of his attendance at the Edinburgh University. Then I found him, so to speak, much more alive, more communicative, more interesting, more interested; and rapidly fascinating me by his personality, as by his imaginings of adventure he had done at North Berwick. There was to me a likeableness about him as a young man that was not apparent in him as a boy.

In the course of talk and argument about literary matters, Stevenson impressed me then as being quietly, but very certainly, sure that he had it in him to write to some purpose. I think that at this time he was more concerned about how to write than about what to write—more anxious about style than matter. He seemed to attach great importance to the use of words which from association carried with them a fuller connotation than a merely dictionary one; and to the effectiveness of words and phrases in everyday use when employed in a not altogether usual connection. But any distinctive quality of style always attracted him. I remember a sentence in one of the judgments of the late Lord Moncrieff ('Tulliebole') which greatly delighted him: 'The Pursuer, in the confidence engendered by the limitations of a provincial imagination, has arrived at an unsound conclusion founded on the basis of a too limited induction of facts.'

And I thought then, as I think now, that both as a man and an author Stevenson was more fundamentally influenced by the Bible, and particularly by the Old Testament, than by any other book. '*Sic itur ad astra!*'

R. L. S. AS PLAYMATE.

BY 'LANTERN-BEARER.'

From CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL, *September* 1919.

I was a mere child when I first made the acquaintance of Robert Louis Stevenson, and in a sufficiently unusual and dramatic manner. His father and mine were friends of a lifetime, drawn together by some likeness of character and the same profession, and interested in one another by the dissimilarity that frequently cements a friendship. I had in my quiet, guarded childhood, passed in a lovely and all-sufficing old garden, smaller occasion and less liberty for adventure than the wild spirit of R. L. S. He was spoken of as 'a curious boy,' unlike others; and perhaps the mothers of my generation had an unacknowledged distrust of the thin, elfin lad with the brilliant eyes. In any case, we had not met save at those terrible entertainments called 'children's parties,' and had eyed one another with the reserved and clear-sighted silence that in thoughtful children is the substitute for older diplomacy.

Our family had in the 'sixties settled for August and September at North Berwick, then a small, unfashionable seaside place, with an East Bay, and a very nebulous West, that had about half-a-dozen villas. The East Bay was to us then a real Elysium—rocks, sea, a safe beach called 'the sands,' on which we had any amount of unusual liberty; and, under the eyes of tenants of the line of villas, little danger could come to the boys and girls who played and dreamed there. The Black Rock was an Alp to be climbed, and I had, with another playfellow, a dear cousin now long dead, begun the ascent. The rock was very hot and dry, and polished in places by the many feet that had gripped in its few niches. Just at the top I found I had the wrong foot foremost, nothing to hold to, and a sensation of fear. My head barely reached the top, but my hat did. To my relief, a thin, brown hand with long fingers came over the edge of the rock, and a thin, brown face, with very keen, interested gray-brown eyes, looked over. 'Take my hand,' said a boy's voice, and the fingers curved for the grip. I looked at the very thin, very long wrist that reached out of a pepper-and-salt shabby coat, and hesitated to trust to it, it looked so very unequal to any efficient help, then up to the eager gray eyes bent on me, and felt that I might trust to the owner's willingness. ‘All right,’ I said, and put a sandy paw in the thin one. ‘Hold tight and change your foot;’ then, ‘One, two, three,’ and a good pull landed me on the top. ‘I am Louis Stevenson,’ the boy said. ‘I was lying up here in the sun, on the warm rock. Isn’t it fine?’ I still think of him as ‘Louis,’ French fashion, without an ‘s,’ as his surname obliterated the final consonant, and it was many years before I realised that it was the English Louis. Our elders, for some unknown reason, never spoke of him without the surname, a kind of unconscious tribute to his difference of temperament. It had a curious effect on my young mind. ‘Bob,’ ‘Fred,’ ‘Jim,’ ‘Harry,’ seemed a homely crowd, but ‘Louis Stevenson’ stood out with a kind of uncanny glory to that strange thing, a child’s mind.

We soon ‘made friends,’ and began on the top of the Black Rock a firm friendship that was never broken, although life set our paths wide apart in his early manhood, and death’s dark river flows between us for a time. Louis was two and a quarter years older than myself; we were both Mercurians in colouring, hair, and eyes; both dreamers and readers. We loved adventure—and its shadow in fancy, for our area of liberty was not very great. But even now, in middle age that verges on the hateful ‘elderly,’ the East Bay of North Berwick holds for me the glamour and richness that was so great for us in that long-gone childhood. The mound that rises at the end, rippled all round by old sheep-tracks, was to us an ancient fort. Louis thought if we dug into it we might find bones of dead Vikings, or their equivalent in North Berwick. Children accept such ideas without cavil when the rainbow of fancy plays over them. Many a game we played on that little terraced hill, and many a time did we run down, to the imminent danger of our legs. Once, indeed, I fell and dislocated my left arm very badly, and suffered great pain. But the leeches that were put on to reduce the swelling were so black and mysterious, so interesting to talk over with Louis afterwards, the sling in which my painful arm reposed was so important, that I felt the injury was a feather in my cap. For a time my share of digging sandpits was suspended, and I was a wounded warrior recovering for fresh feats of arms! Louis was sympathetic and kind, and had a wonderful way of making everything, even injuries, an adventure. A modern Don Quixote, who could stifle the common-sense and dull accuracy of his followers and make them see the giants he saw—the light that never shone here—perhaps the truth that is so well hidden from so-called wiser eyes. In the years that followed, the long years of early youth, Louis and I and some cousins had many ploys together on the Pactolian sands of North Berwick. When the tide was out we fished for a large-headed, stout little fish called a 'podley,' and put partan-cleeks into crab-homes on the red rocks near the harbour. Where these red rocks merge into the yellow wave-marked sand of the lower beach are many mounds of sand beaten by the waves into a kind of embryo rock, covered with green grass-like weed. Here the falling tide leaves clear pools, in which shrimps dart and burrow. One day Louis and I were wading there, he with very skinny legs well displayed by much rolled-up thin trousers. 'Were you ever marooned?' he said suddenly, with the strange look in his eyes that always indicated with him 'an idea.' I was not at all sure what 'marooned' meant, but, unwilling to show my ignorance, said, 'No,' while wondering if it was something Louis meant to do to me. 'Well, look here, suppose you were on a desert island with nothing to eat, what would you do?' I had not the faintest idea, but suggested, 'Fish.' 'Silly, how could you catch fish in the sea? They aren't trout that one can guddle. Shrimps now—there are lots in the sand, and not bad to catch.'

I suggested that we should need a pot to boil them, remembering the pink dainties of a seaside tea-table.

'No,' said Louis, with sparkling eyes; 'raw would do. Father eats oysters, and I once had one; it wasn't very nice, but I heard him say they were very nourishing.'

'Oh Louis!' I cried. 'Those nasty gray things!'

'Yes,' he replied; 'I think shrimps much nicer-looking. Let us be marooned and try some.'

So we imagined ourselves alone in the wide ocean without food or fire. That was easy. Then we caught a few silver-brown wrigglers, and paused.

'Where are we to begin, Louis?'

He looked at the morsel, and said slowly, 'The head would be best; it would die at once—bite quick!'

So we bit quick with sharp young teeth, and found the shrimp quite as good as Louis's oyster; but somehow the movement of the small fish made the meal more cannibalistic than the lethargic oyster would have done. It was, however, an experience added to our store, and Louis was always on the look-out for something new and uncommon.

There was a gloomy building to the west of the bay that always appalled us. A long dead wall without windows, and only one small door. It was the beach door of the 'abattoir,' and once only did Louis and I look in there. One glimpse was enough, and we fled, sick and horrified, to remember for ever the description in the Book of Isaiah, to reject, as too hideous for acceptance, the interpretation of the metaphors of the Bible. 'Could you do that?' we asked, and needed no reply. I see yet the snowy victim, hear the beating of my heart, and the hurried closing of the dark, dreadful door.

The foundry was another whilom haunt, where we watched the glowing iron of our partan-cleeks beaten into shape, bent, and plunged into the water with a hissing sound of remonstrance against the embrace of the enemy of Fire. The grimy figures that worked the iron in the firelit gloom were to us good-natured devils, the skin-aprons and hairy arms helping the delusion, for in the wonderful brain of the boy Louis everything suffered a seaside change into something rich and new. Sometimes we went, with some older comrade to shepherd us, to a bay far to the east, beyond the dark tufa cliffs. Round by the rocks we picked our way, and sometimes paused to look at the green lips of the sea moving against the weed of the far-out rocks. Clear and deep, streaked with streamers of brown tangle, the sea seemed to breathe and pause, and we felt unsafe on the edge of the deep pool. Farther on, the sea-pink nestled in crannies above the reach of the waves, and glowed like tiny rosettes on the breast of the cliff. At our feet the empty houses of dead, wonderful sea-beasts, with sometimes a bit of rope, a broken spar, and once a baby's mattress-bed. Of things like these we wove, with Louis as taskmaster and inspirer, strange tales of wreck and sorrow on the sea, till, as the successive Augusts and Septembers multiplied, we had a store of witching fancies, from which one of us wove masterpieces of thought and literature.

Later we all haunted the West Bay, where more houses were beginning to be built, and, being larger, were more suited to growing families and purses. Here our ploys were huge sandpits, and lantern expeditions, golf, and croquet for a very short time. But the latter game was no favourite with us; there was no make-believe about it, no glamour, and far too much standing still at a 'beastly hoop.' Of the sandpits I have written elsewhere, and the Argonaut voyages we made in the brown herring-boats drawn up and glistening on the beach. A favourite but rare adventure was enjoyed at the spring-tides. For a very short time the long line of jagged rocks below Point Garry, a kind of rampart of the shore, was possible to our reach by wading. There starfish of unusual colour and size abounded, sea-urchins with encrusted jewelled shells, and feathery sea-anemones. By dint of long legs and very short trousers the waders might spend a few delightful and dangerous minutes before the tide turned. Louis was in his element then, anywhere that was off the beaten track, with possibilities of danger, otherwise adventure. His eyes glowed; his very hair, long and lank, seemed to stiffen into more elf-like locks. He always led the band, was always the master-spirit and inspiring force. A kind of magnetism seemed to emanate from him, some of his great, though then undeveloped, personality. Animals came under his charm as readily as we did, and he was always tender to the lame or unlucky, although his sympathy showed itself in the robust form of understanding without words, and his power of diverting the attention to other things. His odd faculty for adventure, his power of throwing glamour over everything he touched, must have been to himself a source of immense pleasure. Dull he could never be, even in sickness. In a letter to my cousin he described himself when ill as a 'pallid weevil in a biscuit.' His extraordinary gift of self-observation suggested a power of detachment of the inner mind, and the exercise of an onlooking faculty.

One game we had with other children that I have not seen mentioned in the many notes on Louis's boyhood. An old gentleman, Mr Girle by name, passionately fond of young people, used to gather round him a little crowd of boys and girls, vowed to look the other way and sent to a little distance; then Mr Girle hid in the sands a china egg, for which whoso found it got sixpence. We scraped in the dry golden sand like rabbits or dogs, and of course saw the china egg as more like that of the fabled roc. Louis was not energetic as the other boys, held by his delicate health from strengthening his slender body. But his eyes shone with that fire of concentration that made him later 'a sedulous ape,' and he always invested our most homely game with a kind of magic, which still endures in the memory of his playmate.

There was in one part of the sands a broken drain, from which bubbled a black and evil-smelling stream. This, Louis had told me, was like the 'Sticks,' as I spelt it in my mind. It fascinated me with its slow, thick ooze, and, regardless of typhoid and diphtheria, we speculated on its origin. One day I went too near; the sand and pipe crumbled, and my leg went in to the knee. This was very amusing to the others, but I was punished for my daring. My parents sent me to my room to wash and be clean, with dry bread for my early dinner. There was a hot raspberry-and-currant tart for that meal, and the strong, fine odour of that dainty still recalls my longing for the forbidden fruit, with a queer memory of gloomy Styx. There are not many things that one can more easily recall than smells, or that so bring back other memories.

My father sometimes joined our games, and set us to one called 'Rosamond's Bower.' He drew with his walking-stick on the smooth, wet, unmarked sand, after the tide went out, a series of lines that started from a semicircle and went round and round in interlaced and crossing lines. I think the secret of getting into the bower was to keep always to the right. But, in any case, we might wander for an hour if the rule was not kept. Mr Thomas Stevenson and my father were martinets over this puzzle; we must go on till we arrived, and no shirking was allowed. To Louis and myself the thin furrow in the sand was a green hedge above our heads, and we always hoped to see a fair Rosamond in the bower. Perhaps she was just as real to these little kings who ran round the maze as some less fair who engaged their fancy in later years. The ideal was always before Louis, and he passed on the power of seeing wonders to his devoted followers. I wonder if any one now draws Rosamond's Bower on the North Berwick sands; if the children of to-day have half such a good time! Louis was an object of envy to me for many an August and September, for he had an iron spade, and I only a wooden one. My mother had once seen a bad accident with the metal delver, and feared to give the opportunity of another to her children. This iron spade somehow set Louis on a pinnacle, and, like other child memories, is clear and strong. As if with wood and iron we worked in later life, and the results were as then, the iron spade cut clean and true to the heart of the sand, and the wooden one confused the outlines we had traced. In nearly every ploy that I remember there is the light of fire. If possible at all, Louis must have a fire. As a boy, the small smoky altar in the sand-house was the core of his enjoyment, and the hidden eye of the little lantern at his feet gave his wild heart dreams and thoughts that till manhood he himself did not understand. In a wind-swept, almost roofless cottage, where we played long ago, the fire was his share of housekeeping, and other joys paled before its ruddy glow. 'More fair than laughter, lo! the flowers of fire.' To him it was a wizard with its change and movement, and strange, vivifying light. Red in all its tints called to him as the master-colour in the rainbow, and his red tie, then a source of derision, became famous the world over. Strong, pure colour attracted his keen sight, as in a savage, and he saw nature from a barbaric point of view. In his love of wild, untrammelled life, sought for then in sand-houses and ruined cottages, he unconsciously reverted to a more primitive condition, a less civilised age. Given the strength that was denied him, but of which he dreamed, he would have looked on the 'bright face of danger' in untrodden lands, would have climbed great mountains, to see below him 'the snowy hills lie bowed like flocks of sheep.' The life of tent and caravan would have called to his fearless spirit, and been transmuted to golden story by his alchemist brain. He saw life and nature unroll their endless magic web, and caught something of their own fire and colour. 'On the loud stairs of honour' he looked back to the joys of childhood and youth, and found in the glamour that his own mind has cast over simple, everyday events more music than came from the clamour of praise, the loud blast of fame. His dreams, beginning in early boyhood, carried him on the wings of the morning to high, enchanted places, and lasted to the end, through seeming failure and hard misinterpretation, and the more dangerous conditions that follow the glory of this world.

As I write I see, not the writer in Vailima, famous the world over, but the strange, thin, glowing face, the slender hand that came down to my aid on the Black Rock with the words that were perhaps the unconscious watchword of all his work—'Take my hand.'

Memories.

WILLIAM M'LAREN.

I can remember Robert Louis Stevenson, for we attended a small school in Frederick Street together for some six months in 1866—say January to August—kept by a Mr Thompson. Mr Thompson's house was on the west side of the street. He had under a score of pupils, some of whom were going to English schools. I was going to Harrow, and a cousin of Archbishop Davidson's, David Davidson, preceded me there from Thompson's. Randall Davidson, as he was then known, was one of the senior boys at Harrow at that time. Louis Stevenson, Davidson, and one or two others were more proficient than I was in Latin and Greek, and formed an upper class. Stevenson was quite a good scholar, tho' he speaks somewhere deprecatingly of his proficiency. An American called Williamson, and Willie Campbell of the Tullichewan Campbells in Glasgow, were in this class. I think and I understood that Louis and Willie Campbell

R. L. S. in 1866. Called by the family,
'Lou in the Baronet's hat.'

(Lent by Miss Louisa Mackenzie.)

were close school friends, and I am sure always had an affectionate regard for one another, tho' their life-work differed. Campbell's was the strenuous life of a business man in Glasgow, ever with active interest in others. Their intercourse may have become limited, but the youthful affection always continued.

Stevenson was not a delicate boy as I first remember him. Fair, tall, a rather narrow figure, a very inquiring mind, and very fond of discussing all round any question that interested him, or, I should say, that did not even peculiarly interest him.

When I was attending Thompson's school I stayed with my grandfather, old Alex. Stevenson, who was a W.S. at No. 9 Heriot Row, and went home to East Lothian for the week-ends; and I went with L. S. to No. 17 Heriot Row sometimes, either then or later. The two houses were of course quite close together. On one occasion, I think when Stevenson was attending the University, I was at No. 17, and his mother—how charming she was and how devoted to Louis!—told of a little incident. She had asked some friends to tea and had given Louis her notes of invitation to post. A day or two passed, but no replies came, and, very perplexed, she mentioned this to him. As he did not remember posting them, an uncanny suspicion crossed his mind, and he went to search for the missing letters, and found them in the pocket of an overcoat. I don't remember hearing if the tea-party came off!

It must have been about then that he stayed a night or two with me when we lived out Gogar way; but I can recall nothing particular except that we had long discussions on various matters, his views being pretty original and strongly held. After that I doubt if I met him again, nor was there any correspondence. I have often wished I had renewed or revived our friendship in that way, and regretted that I once just missed him in Anstruther by a few hours.

A tablet was put up, chiefly at the instance of the

Lorimers, on the house in Anstruther where he lodged. He was associated then with the harbour works his father was constructing, but he had no aptitude for such work. His experience at sea in connection with them, however, especially on the wild west coast when the lighthouses were being built, was made use of afterwards in *Kidnapped* and *Treasure Island.*

Not so very many years ago I was in New Zealand and Australia, and I made the voyage from Sydney to Auckland, touching at Fiji, where I stayed a few weeks, Samoa, &c. I think we only spent an afternoon or at most a day at Apia. It was interesting, especially to me, on account of Vailima being there. How I wished Stevenson had still been alive! The house was then the German Governor's residence.

RECOLLECTIONS OF R. L. S. ON THE 'HILLS OF HOME.'

DAVID TOD.

I am the youngest son of John Tod, the shepherd of Swanston. When I was about fourteen years old I remember quite well when Mr Thomas Stevenson and Mrs Stevenson and Mr Robert Louis Stevenson came to Swanston Cottage. I met them on their first walk through the village along with R. L. S. Very often on the Saturday afternoons and evenings he and a college chum used to visit Robert Young, the gardener, at his house. I have thought since that the chum might have been the late Lord Guthrie. I assisted my father to look after the sheep, and often I had to go over the Torgeith Knowe just at the old quarry above Swanston Cottage. I often came across, hidden in the whin bushes, stories of adventures published in London and Edinburgh. I often read them and put them back again. I knew that Mr T. Stevenson was a very stern father, and perhaps R. L. S. had kept them out of the house—nothing wrong with the stories, but the adventures were there, and you know what boys are who are fond of reading. I may be wrong in my supposition, but I always thought that R. L. S. knew about them.

When R. L. S. came first he would go right up through the sheep and lambs with Coolin his dog, and my father was very angry with him; but they soon drew together and were very fast friends ever after. I always thought that R. L. S. was very like Sir H. Irving. I think I see him yet in my mind's eye, with his velveteen jacket, every time I pass the old farm-house, by the stone figure of Tam O' Shanter sitting taking a pinch of snuff out of his stone mull,—for that was the place that I first saw R. L. S.

I have got in my keeping my father's silver snuff-box, dated 1875 (presented by Charles F. Macara Finnie, Esq., Swanston, 'To John Tod as a token of his long service on the Farm'). I am sure that R. L. S. had many a pinch of snuff out of it.

Mrs Thomas Stevenson presented *Memories and Portraits* to my mother, in which, as you know, the pen-portrait of my father is masterly done, especially the last page.

A PERSONAL RECOLLECTION OF R. L. STEVENSON.

GEORGE CRABBIE.

ALTHOUGH I must have been at the Edinburgh Academy at the same time as Stevenson, I have no recollection of seeing him there, possibly owing to the fact that he was nearly three years my junior, and took little, if any, interest in the School games. However, I remember very distinctly meeting him frequently, some years later, on the ice at Cox's

Gymnasium, near the foot of Pitt Street. He was a thin, lanky youth with long hair, a sallow complexion, and wore tight trousers, a rough double-breasted reefer jacket, a soft turn-over collar with a large bow-tie, and a small round fur cap. His skating was the reverse of graceful, his one object being to perfect himself in what he called the 'Canadian Vine.' I completely fail to remember its intricacies, but I can never forget the ungainly way he carried himself:—bent knees, twisted legs, feet continually crossing and uncrossing, head on a level with his chest as he tried to trace an imaginary figure on the ice. Although he always skated with the utmost vigour, and what the French would call 'abandon,' I never saw him come to grief. On the bank of the pond stood a primitive wooden hut, dignified by the name of Café. Across one of the windows was pasted a notice which was a source of endless amusement to us, 'Café au lait, with or without milk.' We paid it frequent visits, always asking for *Café au lait*, without milk.

SOME MEMORIES OF EAST FIFE AND ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

WILLIAM POUSTIE.

From THE EAST FIFE OBSERVER, *5th January* 1922.

NEARLY a century ago, a young husband and his still younger wife began their housekeeping experiences in one of the flats of an Edinburgh tenement house.

The pride and joy of husband and wife in their newly furnished, cosy little home did not extend beyond their first year's tenancy, as they, and many others, had to face a wave of trade depression which swept over the land, making the efforts of the wage-earning classes to keep on the right side of things very difficult to accomplish.

As these young people could not see their way to remain in town without the aid of a steady income, they resolved to remove to the country and do some prospecting for work in the locality where they were known.

The husband, being a wright to trade, went to Port Hopetown Sawmills, and bought as much timber as would make a bench for himself, also a few hard-wood boards and some pine, and then bade farewell to a town life.

Although they now ceased to be citizens of this fair city, Edinburgh was not yet done with them, for after many years there came from the Scottish Capital one of her most gifted sons—Robert Louis Stevenson, who lodged with them a whole summer. . . .

For many years past the wright and his wife have rested beneath the daisies which grow in the old churchyard, a stone-throw from the house in which they had lived for so many happy years, and in whose rooms Robert Louis Stevenson spent some of his youthful days. A famous litterateur, essayist, and critic, while speaking some time ago at the inauguration of the Edinburgh Stevenson Club, referred to Stevenson's early home life, and remarked that in his opinion the excessive piety which prevailed there might not have been conducive to his boyhood's happiness. But be that as it may. The reverence which was shown at Cunzie House to all that was pure, honest, and of good report was just as marked there as in his Edinburgh home.

In fact, those rooms were chosen by his father for this very reason. And young Stevenson enjoyed his country quarters, for those of us who saw him daily soon noticed a growing alertness of step as he passed from his harbour work to his rooms. Once there he was secure from all interruption, and could with impunity sit and write as far into night, sometimes morning, as he chose, not, however, at harbour studies, or lighthouse-building problems, as his worthy father would have desired, but patiently cultivating his gifts of imagination and style in the writing of stories. None of these early efforts in literature, he tells us, ever saw the light. But that did not deter the young author from 'carrying on.' Neither did his lack of physical robustness, nor the depressing thoughts which at this time often visited him, stay his hand from striving to perfect his work, work which ultimately reached full fruition in his later romances and poetry. And now his name is imperishable. In some of the many chats which Stevenson had with the lady of the house, a charming conversationalist, they discussed the deeper things of life, such as the doctrine of election and kindred subjects. His host and hostess were prominent members of a Church which based its belief on the 'Whosoever Will' of Revelation, rather than the teaching of the Shorter Catechism, which says, 'Out of His mere good pleasure He elected some to everlasting life.' Stevenson seemed to have favoured the lady's views on this matter, for he has left to us his own testimony, which is that 'The saints are the sinners who kept on trying.' The memories of those early days—he would be eighteen or thereabout—are told in his interesting book, *Familiar Studies.* In that part of that book which tells of his training as an engineer at Anstruther, he mentions that he lodged with one John Brown, a carpenter, and gives us a vivid pen-picture of the close of a summer's night at Cunzie House. 'Late I sat into the night. The weather was so warm that I kept my window open, the night without populous with moths. As the darkness deepened, my taper beaconed forth ever brightly, thicker and thicker came the dusky night-fliers to gyrate for one brilliant instant round the flame and fall in agonies upon my paper. Flesh and blood could not endure this spectacle, and out went the light, and off I went to bed.'

Alongside this window is fixed a bronze tablet, enclosed in an ornate frame, telling that Robert Louis Stevenson lived there during the summer of 1868

RECOLLECTIONS OF R. L. S.

MARGARET MOYES BLACK.

MY most distinct memories of Robert Louis Stevenson are associated with Edinburgh and the Stevensons' winter home at 17 Heriot Row.

'R. L. S.' in those long by-gone days was a very interesting personality; and, in spite of his occasionally weird attire, singularly picturesque and distinguished. Slim and graceful, he impressed one by that peculiar air of distinction. His eyes were particularly impressive. They had in them a curious look of 'far-seeing,' a something of the glamour of the seer. One felt that they appraised correctly all whom they looked at, even while they saw, far in the future, visions that would by-and-bye take shape and live, or, looking back into the dreams of the past, could gather from the forgotten years a wealth of story and romance.

When I first knew him he had already seriously chosen a literary career for himself. We, his juniors, looked on him with awe and admiration, and foresaw for him a great literary future. One of his greatest charms was that marvellous youthfulness which so endeared him to his juniors and which no prolonged sufferings from bad health could ever impair. His buoyant freshness of mind and outlook made him look on life with the eager gladness of a boy. Most grown-up folk can be young occasionally; but *he* was always young, always a boy at heart, always in sympathy with youth and its joys and sorrows. Another thing one always associates with him is courage; a gallant bravery of spirit which through many illnesses and all the worries and troubles of life never forsook him. That, with the brave words he wrote, will help all who know the man and his books to fight the battle of life heroically.

Memorable also is his deep love of nature, of the free life of 'the open road'; his tenderness and consideration for dogs and horses and all animals; his passionate love of Scotland—the capes and isles where shine the lighthouses his ancestors lighted, the Pentlands so dear to his heart, the 'wine-red' moors, and, perhaps above all, Edinburgh, old and gray, stern with a grim strength akin to Scottish character, beautiful with a magic beauty. These things lay deep in his heart and were loved all through his life so dearly that it is terribly pathetic to think the man who so loved them had to leave them and live and die in far-off Samoa.

It is curious how, when one recalls R. L. S., one sees again the luminous eyes, the graceful bend of the head, the somewhat foreign motion of the hands when speaking, and realises the delight of his conversation; but the *actual* talk cannot be reproduced by memory. It was charming but illusive; and while one can remember the subjects of his conversations at times, the words slip from one's mind as quicksilver slips through the fingers. Various of his friends have noted this peculiarity. It is strange that one cannot recall the words of a man who was not only a prince of talkers himself, but had the rare gift of making those whom he talked with show at their best in a conversation. In all things he had that delightful power of making others show themselves at their best, and he seemed, for the time being, to share with you his brilliance and his wit.

One amusing picture of him is very clear in my memory, framed, as so many memories of him are, by the gray houses of Heriot Row, the cold blue of an Edinburgh March sky, the shivery swirl of the east wind round street corners, and the grit of flying dust! I had called at 17 Heriot Row to see his mother and a cousin who was staying there, but they had gone out. R. L. S. entertained me for a few minutes in the dining-room and escorted me to the door. On the doorsteps he suddenly asked why I had not been at a recent grand bazaar. I replied that I had not arrived in Edinburgh in time for it. He remarked that was very stupid; and on my asking, 'Why, was it extra good?' he said he had contributed a very clever skit to it, which sold for a whole half-crown! I asked if I could not still buy a copy. 'No,' he replied sadly, 'the sale is over. But,'—after a dramatic pause—'I can *give* you a copy!' And he retreated through the hall, with the long, gliding steps of a stage-conspirator, leaving the departing visitor waiting patiently on the doorstep. By-and-bye he returned with a small printed leaflet in his hand—a precious leaflet signed with the magic letters 'R. L. S.,' with the black and heavy down-strokes mentioned by Mr Peacock-Edwards in his description of R. L. S.'s writing while in his father's law office. 'There,' its author said, bowing gracefully and holding it out, 'is "The Charity Bazaar"—an allegorical dialogue—and it is by *me*, and worth a whole half-crown!'

Striking an attitude, he glared at the grateful receiver of the gift to see if his generosity was properly appreciated. It *was* very greatly appreciated. But how little did either giver or receiver think, that long-ago, coldly-sunny March morning, that the copy of 'The Charity Bazaar'—still safely treasured—would, as Mr Lloyd Osbourne says of the Davos Booklets in his preface to *Moral Emblems*, be worth to-day a very solid sum in pounds!

In those long-ago days R. L. S. professed to be very scornful of Edinburgh and Edinburgh society. But, while taking little part in the more youthful society with its dances and gaieties, he greatly appreciated the many people of fine intellect and solid learning who made the Edinburgh of that day a place to be remembered with pride and pleasure. And if at a dance he leant against the wall and looked forlornly miserable, he loved a dinner-party, even a young folks' dinner, and delighted the guests with his fun and humour—if he was in a gay mood—or gave you a succession of cold shivers if it was his pleasure to deal in horrors and recall the gruesome tales of a long-buried past for your delectation. And, grave or gay, how delightful he was, and what charming dinner-parties for young relatives and friends the Stevensons gave at Heriot Row—with old Mr Stevenson as interesting to listen to as his son, and Mrs Stevenson an ideal hostess, gracious and charming.

SOME MEMORIES OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

WILLIAM C. M'EWEN.

IT was not until the autumn of 1868 that R. L. S. and I met as fellow students at the University of Edinburgh, as although we both were members of the D'Arcy Thompson Class Club (1865-67) in the Edinburgh Academy, I did not join it until long after Stevenson left. There were studying at the University several of his classmates, and they formed a small band of brothers, which, unfortunately, for a considerable time at any rate, he did not join. As a matter of fact they and he looked upon various matters of importance from different points of view; but no one has better described his student life than Louis himself, and so I do not refer to the subject.

Although at the University together for, I think, seven years, we were never in the same class. He appears to have selected those he 'attended' in his own peculiar way. For instance he did not attend that of English Literature—and the occupant of the Chair then was David Masson, whose deep interest in his students in every way was universally recognised.

I saw a good deal of Louis however, as we had certain interests in common, the principal being love of penetrating into the nooks and corners of our ancient City.

I well remember the great snowball fight where the innocent suffered for the guilty, and other incidents of his college life; but there is one which I do not think has been recorded, and which is of some little interest as illustrative of his little way. It was in connection with a Rectorial Election—I forget which—when I recollect his coming into the quadrangle, attired 'as usual,' but having a white Shakespearean collar stencilled with the name of the unpopular candidate in vivid black letters. Louis was a keen partisan, but this form of propaganda had an unfortunate result. His entry was very quickly noticed and he was promptly attacked by two or three of the opposite party, who endeavoured to tear away the offending collar. It was not, however, a paper one, and Louis was having a very bad time of it when he was rescued, half choked and very mad, by some of us who were fortunately close by.

Gradually Louis's virtues became more fully recognised by us, and by 1870 he might be said to have become popular. In that year he was the prime mover in the successful formation of what is known to fame as the D'Arcy Thompson Class Club. This meant a number of meetings with classmates at various rendezvous, which latter in those days were no doubt at establishments such as 'Rutherford's.' The Club was formally constituted at a Meeting held in 5 St Andrew Square on 4th December 1870, the first Dinner being fixed for the first Wednesday of the following year. Louis looked after this important event, and was the very life and soul of a most happy re-union of old classmates. During the course of the proceedings his 'poetic faculty' came into action, and he rattled off impromptu a string of doggerel lines in which he endeavoured to make each of the surnames of the party rhyme with some word which seemed to be appropriate to the character of the individual owner. They were so bad, however, that he was not requested to put them in writing. Unfortunately amongst his other good qualities he was not a judge of wine, and on this occasion the claret selected by him did not prove to be up to standard, as next day hardly any of those present were able to attend to their ordinary duties, for which they blessed R. L. S. Indeed I find in a subsequent Minute of the Club that it was agreed that 'the Committee of the Club should arrange for the next Dinner after the experience of this evening.' At a Meeting held in January 1880 Louis was appointed Poet Laureate of the Club, and he was requested to have his first poem ready for next meeting. It was not however until some years later that he was able to write to our worthy Secretary, J. Wilson Brodie, C.A., with the manuscript of 'To the Thompson Class Club from their stammering Laureate.' This poem was read at the subsequent dinner. It was resolved that it should not be published, but privately printed for the Club, each Member getting a copy. This was done in the form of a four-paged leaflet; and it will be in the recollection of many that some time ago, a copy having got into the hands of the late Colonel W. F. Prideaux, it was sold by his Executors at Sotheby's, and fetched no less a sum than £230, and caused considerable excitement at the time.

With regard to the other poem, by 'Their Laureate to an Academy Class Dinner Club,' forming No. X. of *Underwoods* (in Scots) Book X., Louis, in the very interesting introductory note, says: 'Now spelling is an Art of great difficulty in my eyes, and I am inclined to lean upon the Printer, even in common practice, rather than to venture abroad upon new quests.' In this case however he did not do so as the MS. (or possibly the proof) was sent to our Secretary for revisal of the spelling—a work which involved some little trouble, as such words as 'pingein'', 'pitaty-par'n', &c. are not very common.

As regards Louis's study of the Law, I had some knowledge, through our mutual friend Charles Baxter, whose Firm's law chambers at 11 So. Charlotte Street immediately adjoined those of mine at No. 9.

In those early days legal business was carried on in a different form from that holding nowadays—there being much night work. Accordingly Baxter and I met from time to time in the evening, when we discussed matters generally and Louis frequently joined us. I particularly recollect on some occasions adjourning to the place of public entertainment which was affiliated (according to the practice of the time) to our office and two or three others in the immediate vicinity. In a small inner room there Louis would hold forth, not allowing Baxter or myself to get a word in edgeways. Time did not weigh with him in his exalted mood, and he was very indignant when attention was at last drawn by us long-enduring ones to the lateness of the hour and our respective law classes next morning.

The finale of Louis's legal career is well known, and I may say that after that time I, and I think his other classmates, saw him but seldom. He to the end, however, maintained his good feeling towards us and the Thompson Class Club.

RECOLLECTIONS.

MRS DOUGLAS MACLAGAN.

THE first time I ever saw Robert Louis Stevenson in the flesh was at the famous sale of work in his mother's house at 17 Heriot Row, where he was giving the guests as they entered what is now known as the 'Bazaar Book.' It was brilliant banter on the wares to be sold and on the buyers who were to buy. It discovered his talent in a flash; the style was at once R. L. S. We laughed much over it, and it was kept for a time; and then, I suppose—'so blind was I to see or to foresee'—it went into the waste-paper basket.

I once found a £5 note in my waste-paper basket, but if I could find that bazaar pamphlet there to-day, I would find what would be more like a £500 note!

After that Louis was always a hero to me, and I watched with interest the beginning of his literary career, the work of an artist from the very outset, and with what a thrill of delight one read his articles and stories one by one as they appeared!

I was only a visitor in Edinburgh on that first early meeting, but a year or so later I married and settled there, and then I came to know intimately Louis's parents, Mr and Mrs Thomas Stevenson, most delightful of people. Mrs Stevenson told me that her husband called me one of his sweethearts; and, like Pet Marjorie, I was 'primmed with majestick pride.' He was a dear, lovable old man, very amusing and also amusable. He was a great theologian, too, and presented me with a book of his own, with the not unassuming title of *Christianity Confirmed.* He told me many tales of Louis as a boy; how he had laid a heavy hand (and Tom Stevenson in his simple rectitude could lay a heavy hand indeed) on rules for a club of the boy's own forming, which began with the precept: 'Disregard everything our parents have ever taught us'!

Louis must have been away then, for I never met him when we dined at 17 Heriot Row, but I heard much of him through his parents.

The next time I saw him was when he sat beside us at the *Flying Dutchman*, which was being performed by the Carl Rosa Company. He was an old friend of my husband, and they talked together, but in the excitement of hearing the *Flying Dutchman* for the first time I remember nothing save the impression of the music on us all, and Louis's rather unusual appearance in a short velvet coat, and long hair. It was early days for those vagaries, and made him conspicuous and affected-looking among the crowd.

Years went on, and the next time I remember his being in Edinburgh was a time when he was very ill. He sent for my husband when he was recovering, and they had a long talk about their old boyhood's days. Either he (my husband) or some other friend, who saw him in bed at that time, told me that he talked of conscience, and said that, for his part, he only allowed his own to come out for an hour in the early morning, and then he bottled him up for the rest of the twenty-four hours!

Louis married, Tom Stevenson died, the years passed. Mrs Stevenson went and came from Vailima, and always she came to see me, or sent for me, to tell me the latest news of Louis. I heard much of his life there, and the dress, scanty enough in hot weather, and chiefly composed of a little bit of white muslin, with garlands of live flowers swung round the waist and on the head. To this Mrs Stevenson was obliged to conform to please the natives; but she added, with some pride, 'I always wore my widow's cap on the top of it, *that* I refused to part with.' What a picture!

When Louis died, she addressed to us with her own hand the little paper which was printed for private circulation, and which records the end, and his own prayer.

When she came back she went to Randolph Cliff, and there I used to listen with eagerness to the many things she had to tell of Louis and Vailima. The last communication I had with her was shortly before she died. Charles Furze, that charming artist, now also gone from among us, was anxious to know the mother of R. L. S., so I invited them to meet at luncheon. The morning of the day a note came from Mrs Stevenson to say that she was in bed with a chill, and could not come. Charles Furze did not pretend to conceal his disappointment. It was the beginning of the end—she died a few weeks later.

Once, when she was starting for Vailima, she said to me, ‘Have you any message for Louis?’ ‘Yes; tell him to send us some more poems.’ ‘I won’t do that!’ she replied. ‘He never writes verses except when he is ill or depressed; every poem is a shadow of death to us!’

Mr Winston Churchill has said that he intends to spend the first million years in Heaven painting pictures, so let us hope that Charles Furze is now painting his magnificent canvases, and that Louis Stevenson is writing his most poignant and beautiful verses, no longer ill or depressed!

Personal Reminiscences of the University Life of Robert Louis Stevenson.

THE LATE REVEREND ARCHIBALD BISSET.

I knew Stevenson well during his early life when he was an author in the making, trying his ’prentice hand at English composition, and my intercourse with him lasted until the publication of his *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes.* I was not a fellow-student, for he was several years my junior; but I had the good fortune to be asked to read with him in Classics and Philosophy in prospect of an examination he had to pass for admission to the Scottish Bar, and I thus had a favourable opportunity of becoming acquainted with his literary aims and ambitions, and the difficulties he had to overcome in prosecuting them.

I first met him at the house of a University friend, and we were discussing in student fashion some questions in Greek philosophy, when a Mr Stevenson was announced. My friend knew him well, and, in introducing him, he added, 'son and successor of Thomas Stevenson, the well-known lighthouse engineer.' 'Son, certainly,' said Stevenson, 'but not successor if I can help it.'

He was a fragile-looking youth of about eighteen, with a very noticeable stoop of the shoulders, and a poorly-developed chest, which suggested constitutional delicacy: and this impression was confirmed by his long hair, which made his face look emaciated. But as a set-off to these signs of physical weakness he had eyes that were quick-glancing and observant and brimful of humour, or, I should rather say, of banter. He had a large but expressive mouth, which led one to anticipate incisive speech: though in saying this I am very likely reading into this first interview impressions derived from future intercourse.

My friend and I continued our conversation, and Stevenson sat as a silent listener, for he knew nothing about Greek philosophy. But the rôle of silent listener was one he never could maintain for long, and he suddenly broke in with the question, had we read Carlyle's essay on Sir W. Scott? . . . And he forthwith launched forth, not on a defence of Carlyle, but on a disparagement of Scott on his own account. I, who knew nothing of Stevenson's gifts, listened with surprise to this youth speaking with such fluency and brilliance. He evidently had Scott at his finger-ends; and in reply to our dissent from some of his views, he was ready with references and quotations in support of them. . . .

My friend was familiar with Stevenson's conversational power, and was, therefore, not so surprised as I was. But I remember saying to him after Stevenson left that I thought that this quondam pupil of his (for he had been my friend's pupil) was likely to make a name for himself yet. After this I met Stevenson frequently.

At the University he enrolled as a student in the

Greek class (Professor Blackie's), and then attended as seldom as possible. In the mathematical class, absenteeism could not be so easily practised, for here the discipline was strict. It began to be whispered that he would have himself to blame if his name did not appear on the Honours list: and this, he said, led to his conversion for the remainder of the session. His friends twitted him on his sudden devotion to triangles and trigonometry, and he said: 'I know how it would delight my father if even the shadow of the Mathematical Honours list fell on me, and I want to please him.' . . . The truth is, that Stevenson never was a University student in the usual sense of the word. Not only was his attendance at classes intermittent, but he followed no regular curriculum. Then he took very little part in the work of the classes which he did attend. He used to sit on a far-back bench, pencil in hand and with a note-book before him, and looking as if he were taking notes of the lectures. But in reality he took no notes, and seldom listened to the lectures. 'I prefer,' he used to say, 'to spend the time in writing original nonsense of my own.' He always carried in his pocket a note-book, which he sometimes called his 'Book of Original Nonsense'; and not only during the class-hour, but at all odd times, he jotted down thoughts and fancies in prose and verse. Of course he generally gave class exams. the go-by. And thus it came to pass that, except among his intimates, he was regarded as an idler. An idler, however, he never was. His time and energy, his heart and soul, were devoted to literature; and while he seemed to outsiders an idler, he was reading French and English classics, and filling note-books with attempts to imitate them. He was once spoken to seriously about taking a University degree. 'If literature,' said the friend, 'is to be your pursuit, a degree will be all but indispensable.' But he would not be persuaded. 'I would sooner commit to memory,' he said, 'the long bead-roll of names in the early chapters of the Book of Chronicles than cram for a degree-exam.' And so the matter ended. . . .

It was while he was studying Law that he asked me to read Classics and Philosophy with him; and as this meant daily intercourse with him during the five working days of the week for over nine months, it gave me an opportunity of knowing him more intimately. From the outset he let me understand that I must not expect him to do any dictionary work. 'I've lost my Greek dictionary, and haven't used my Latin dictionary since I left school. When I come to a word that puzzles me I just guess its meaning and pass on; and my guesses are so often correct, that I think Latin must have been my mother-tongue in some previous state of existence.' He did no preparatory work; but this did not hinder progress while he was reading Cicero's *De Oratore* (one of the books prescribed), for the Latin is very simple, and he could translate it at sight with wonderful facility. But Horace's *Ars Poetica* and Juvenal's *Satires* could not be made to yield their meaning so readily; and at last an agreement was come to that I should read first and that he should follow: and I am bound to say that his translation, if not more correct, was always more idiomatic than mine. Greek was not required for the exam., and this was fortunate, for he was a very indifferent Greek scholar. . . .

Very little philosophy was needed for the exam.; but as dictionary work was not required, he read many works in addition to those prescribed. He did this the more readily because, as he said, he wanted to know Philosophy enough to disagree with his friend James Walter Ferrier, 'who loves to mystify and overwhelm me with his philosophical theories.' . . . Accordingly, he read Bishop Berkeley's *Principles of Human Knowledge*, parts of Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*, and especially his world-famous essay on 'Miracles,' John Stuart Mill's *Examination of Hamilton's Philosophy*, and Professor Ferrier's *Lectures on Greek Philosophy*.

He was very slightly interested in the philosophical questions discussed by these writers; but he was charmed with the classic grace of Bishop Berkeley's style. Hume he also admired for his lucid thinking, only he said his style was 'terribly otiose.' Before he came to me he had read Herbert Spencer's *First Principles*, his *Psychology*, and *Biology*. . . .

At this time he was a very diligent frequenter of old shops and bookstalls, in quest of worm-eaten treasures. One day he drew from his pocket a dirty-looking volume with broken boards, which he had picked up at a bookstall in Leith Walk,—price 3d. Its title was, *A Treatise partly Theological to prove that Liberty of Philosophy may be allowed without Prejudice to Piety;* and it was anonymous. 'Read it,' he said to me, 'and see if it is not worth ten times its weight in gold. I wonder who the author is, and how it happens that the book has been passed over.' Well, after reading it with very great interest, I sent it to a friend who was well versed in the history of philosophy; and two days later I had a note from him saying that the anonymous book was a translation of Spinoza's famous *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, a work in which what is now called the 'Higher Criticism' was for the first time applied to the Old Testament. When Stevenson heard this he wrote, 'I felt sure that the writer had royal blood in his veins.' Another time he appeared with an odd volume of John Knox's works, which contained his 'First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women.' 'The Blast,' he said, 'is magnificent: my father thinks it deserves to be bound along with Carlyle's *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, and I almost think it does.' It was this pamphlet of Knox's that led him to write his two essays, 'John Knox and his relations with Women.' I read them in their first form: in their final form they were published as an article in *Macmillan's Magazine* in the autumn of 1874. . . .

I want to say something about Stevenson's relation to religion and religious beliefs during these years. This was the second subject of controversy between him and his father. Mr Thomas Stevenson was a staunch Conservative in politics, and was quite as staunchly orthodox in his religious creed. At that time the name 'Higher Criticism' had not been coined; or, at least, it had not been consecrated by the benediction of any of the Christian Churches. This criticism existed in the Universities, not among the theological professors, but among the students. It especially flourished in the debating and literary societies, and there it let its voice be heard with the confident ring of infallibility. Mr Thomas Stevenson was a Calvinist, by whom the Westminster Confession and the Shorter Catechism were held as next in rank to the sacred Books. He was also a stout believer in the traditional view of the plenary inspiration of Scripture. I remember one evening when I was dining at his house, Robert Louis gave utterance to some heterodox opinions regarding the authority of the Old Testament, and his father told him that he would not have such views expressed at his table, and if this was what he was learning at the University, then the sooner he left it the better. Another time I was walking with father and son out towards Cramond, and the latter had a great deal to say in praise of Herbert Spencer's *Theory of Evolution.* At length his father said, 'I think, Louis, you've got Evolution on the brain. I wish you would define what the word means.' 'Well, here it is *verbatim.* Evolution is a continuous change from indefinite incoherent homogeneity to definite coherent heterogeneity of structure and function through successive differentiations and integrations.' 'I think,' said his father, with a merry twinkle in his eyes, 'your friend Mr Herbert Spencer must be a very skilful writer of polysyllabic nonsense.' . . .

It is an utterly wrong impression that some people have that Thomas Stevenson was a hard and tyrannical father. He was one of the most genial of men, whose conversation, especially in the company of young men, was a strange medley of pleasantry and wisdom. You had only to be in his company a very short time in order to discover from whom Louis had derived that gift of freakish banter, which was enjoyed not least by those who were its victims. But, as I have said, he was stern and unbending in all that pertained to religion; he was in fact a deeply religious man of narrow views, who did not readily believe in the sincerity of any who professed heterodox opinions. There were many like him then: and some are like him still. Yet all the same he was a most lovable man and a most indulgent father. . . .

Shortly after I was licensed, I had to preach for Dr Wallace in Old Greyfriars' Church. Stevenson and his father were present. During sermon I saw Robert Louis scribbling in his note-book, which he carried wherever he went. I knew very well that he was about the last man in Scotland who would think of taking notes of a sermon; and when I met him at the close I said, 'Were you scribbling "original nonsense" in that note-book of yours instead of listening to the sermon?' And he replied, 'I was copying out some beautiful sentences from an Evening Prayer in a volume of *Family Prayers* that I found in the pew:' and he produced the note-book and read from it the following words: 'O God, Who hast appointed unto man the night for rest, and the day for the works and labours of life, we beseech Thee to grant us quiet repose this night, that our bodies being refreshed with sleep, our minds may be more wakeful and strong to serve Thee: that so we may abide all our nights and days in Thy love. Laying aside all cares and anxieties may we sleep in the peace of a good conscience, in the faith of Thy presence and protection, and in the hope of Thine eternal glory. Let not our sleep, or any bodily indulgence, degenerate into intemperance and sloth, but be in such measure as is needed to restore our wasted strength and to fit us again for the duties of our calling: that so even our sleep may be holy, and that whatever we do we may do all to Thy glory.'

Then he bade me good-night, saying, 'Before I see you again, I shall have these words by heart.' And two days after he repeated them.

(It was at this time, when he was reading with Mr Bisset, that Robert Louis Stevenson, arriving one day and finding that his tutor was out, must have written whilst waiting for him these verses in the leaf of a Greek lexicon of Mr Bisset's, where long afterwards they were discovered.)—[Ed.]

Morrisonian! Morrisonian!
   How I wonder what you are!
From the orthodox religion
   Do you differ very far?

Burghers I have known a-many,
   Anti-Burghers, not a few,
Baptists, Quakers, Plymouth Brethren,
   But the ne'er a one like you.

Are you regularly christened?
   Or a living *loup-garou?*
Is your credo like what mine is?
   Do you think the Bible true?

Do you take the Bible wholly,
   Or *réchauffé* in a mince
As the heretics of yore did,
   And the orthodox do since?

I suppose you've quite excluded
   That old bugbear they called hell
Long ago when men were wicked,
   And not taught to reason well.

Much or little as you like it,
I 'm for reprobation :—you,
Not so sure of your position,
Take the general mercy view.

There 's a creed for every one now,
Observation seems to tell :
You can read the Bible backward
If it don't read forward well.

This with that and that with t' other,
You delight me, I declare ;
Who 'd have fancied that religion
Was so easy an affair ?

Why it 's a matter like a salad ;
Bob likes sugar, Peter don't,
Sam insists on putting eggs in,
Polly quite as surely won't.

You can fit your creed like raiment,
Add redemption, cancel hell,
Ease the buttons where it galls you,
Till the whole affair sits well.

Clearly I 'll go right the Bible
To find everything I need.
Here, boy, bring me paste and scissors,
For I 'm going to make a creed.

RECOLLECTIONS.

A. J. W. STORIE.

LOUIS was a most congenial soul, very amusing, and he and my brother Frank, who was an engineer and home from abroad, used to have great fun in our rooms in South Castle Street, along with John Jackson, latterly Sir John Jackson. They were at that time all attending Professor Jenkin's engineering class at the University. My mother used to send me rounds of corned beef, one of which I used to keep in a cupboard in my room, and Louis, when he called at any time up till a pretty late hour, used to make at once for the cupboard and cut himself a slice of the beef, of which he was fond, and he washed this down with a glass of beer.

Once he came with me on a visit to my people at the Manse of Insch, Aberdeenshire. I remember an amusing incident of that visit. After dinner, and pretty late, when it was dark, Louis was lost, and my brother and I went out to find him. Ultimately he appeared holding up his hands, which were more or less covered with blood. It seems he had gone into the garden (which we had visited in the afternoon) to eat gooseberries, and of course, not seeing, he scratched his hands on the bushes. When Louis returned to Edinburgh, which was very soon after the gooseberry incident, he used to show his wounds to his friends with great amusement.

We were all very fond of Louis, who had a charming nature and disposition. Even after my brother had left this country for abroad, Louis used still to come to see me, and he gave me many an evening's amusement in my rooms; but he never gave me, in those boyish days of jests and laughter, any indication of the great genius which he displayed afterwards.

MEMORIES.

MRS LOUISA GULLAND.

AT the age of thirteen society is nothing and companionship everything.

When my friend Leila Romanes and I were seated among the branches of a tree in the garden, reading the exciting adventures of Midshipman Easy, taken from the library of the Chambers Institute at Peebles, we thought it a great trouble to be interrupted by Louis Stevenson, as he was then called, who came with pencil and note-book, begging us to write something for him. He scribbled a great deal in those days, but we never thought of reading anything of his then, so I don't know what we lost.

Later, when I was about seventeen, my first lesson on looking at pictures was given me by Louis at the Exhibition, where he pointed out the meaning of some special favourites of his. I wondered very much at his weird taste, as 'Caliban' or 'Nickar the Soulless' did not appeal to me in those days. He was a grand teacher, and keen to get you to like what he liked, and to see what he saw in things. It opened up quite a new way to me of looking at pictures when he explained the hidden meaning, which I never forgot, and profited by.

Mr and Mrs Stevenson and my father and mother used to dine with one another when the Stevensons lived in Heriot Row, and I remember my father saying he thought Louis was very impertinent, as he contradicted his father flatly before every one at table; but that was, I think, when he didn't want to follow his father's profession, and was groping for a footing in literature.

Reminiscences.

SIR ROBERT RUSSELL SIMPSON.

I was introduced to R. L. Stevenson by my cousin, Sir Walter Simpson, who, as is well known, was the 'Cigarette' as Stevenson was the 'Arethusa' of the first of his famous books.

I had frequent opportunities of meeting R. L. S. at Sir Walter's house and elsewhere, especially during his early career. It did not take long to discover that he was an exceptionally interesting man, and quite out of the range of ordinary mortals. Whatever subject was under discussion, be it the Parliament House, the prospects of success or failure of the two friends at the Bar or otherwise, the Speculative Society which was Stevenson's first field of fame, current political events,—all brought out flashes of wit, humour, and good-natured criticism from him. I sometimes expressed a wish that a Boswell could accompany him to take notes of his extremely clever and original sayings. He dropped pearls.

I had the pleasure of knowing Stevenson's father and mother, who were held in high regard by a large circle of friends in Edinburgh. They were justly proud of their son's success as an author, although they, especially his father, did not fall in with all his views. There is nothing more characteristic in Stevenson's writings than the incident in his *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes*, in which it is related that during his visit to the Trappist Monastery an Irish priest said to him, 'You must be a Catholic, and come to Heaven.' In reply the traveller appealed to the family affection. 'Your father and mother?' cried the priest. 'Very well, you will convert them in their turn when you go home.' Stevenson, knowing well that his father was a staunch Protestant, writes, 'I think I see my father's face! I would rather tackle the Gœtulian lion in his den than embark on an enterprise against the family theologian.'

I have exchanged friendly letters with Sir Sidney Colvin in regard to what he considered the want of appreciation of Stevenson in Edinburgh circles. I am satisfied that Sir Sidney was in error in stating in his *Memories and Notes of Persons and Places* that Stevenson 'had not been thought good enough for the polite society of his native Edinburgh.' My cousin, Miss Evelyn Blantyre Simpson, author of *Stevenson's Edinburgh Days,* and all his intimate friends held him in high esteem. I have in my possession Miss Simpson's large collection of photographs of Stevenson, and a lock of his hair.

In corresponding with Sir Sidney Colvin, who edited Stevenson's *Letters*, I expressed disappointment that none of the letters were addressed to my cousin Sir Walter Simpson; but Sir Sidney explained that he had not been able to trace any letters to him. While they often spent their holidays together and had not much occasion for correspondence, there can be no doubt that my cousin, from time to time, received interesting letters from his friend. I distinctly remember his reading to me a letter which he had that morning received from R. L. S., who was then residing at Bournemouth, in which the writer stated that he was engaged in a blood-curdling story, which, no doubt, was *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde.*

Stevenson occasionally accompanied my cousins, during successive winters, to Bathgate, where there was a well-known skating-pond, and they generally had tea at my father's house. My father could not make Stevenson out at first, but he soon became attracted to him and admired his racy talk.

In connection with Bathgate there is a letter (vol. i. of Stevenson's *Letters*) from Stevenson to his friend Edmund Gosse, of date 29th July 1879, as follows:

'You will probably be glad to hear that I am up again in the world: I have breathed again, and had a frolic on the strength of it. The frolic was yesterday, Sawbath; the scene the Royal Hotel, Bathgate; I went there with a humorous friend to lunch. The maid soon showed herself a lass of character. She was looking out of the window. On being asked what she was after, "I'm lookin' for my lad," said she. "Is that him?" "Weel, I've been lookin' for him a' my life, and I've never seen him yet," was the response. I wrote her some verses, in the vernacular; she read them. "They're no bad for a beginner," said she. The landlord's daughter, Miss Stewart, was present in oil-colour;

so I wrote her a declaration in verse, and sent it by the handmaid. She (Miss S.) was present on the stair to witness our departure, in a warm, suffused condition.'

The Stewart family were clients of mine. Miss Stewart became Mrs Gordon, and died recently. With the view of tracing the verses referred to I wrote to her son, Dr Alexander Stewart Gordon, who replied as follows: 'No trace, I regret to say, has ever been found of the "Declaration in Verse" which Stevenson wrote to my mother. The portrait in oil-colour is still at Bathgate. It was bequeathed to my sister, Mrs Stewart, but she is giving it to me to be passed on later to her children.'

When in Paris in the summer of 1876 I arranged to meet my cousins Walter Simpson and his brother William, who were then at Barbizon, or Grez, with Stevenson and other friends. I suggested that, instead of their coming to Paris, I might go to them; but they preferred to come to Paris. I was, however, compensated by having an opportunity of meeting that brilliant member of the Stevenson family, R. A. M. Stevenson, known familiarly as 'Bob.' Another cousin of mine, after taking his medical degree at Edinburgh, was attending classes in Paris. I dined with him and R. A. M. Stevenson at a hotel in the Latin quarter, and after dinner, in a lovely moonlight night, we had, under the guidance of R. A. M. S., a walk through historic parts of Paris, which were all well known to R. A. M. S., and which were described by him in a way that seemed almost to excel the narrative powers of his famous cousin.

Miss Simpson maintained to the end her friendship with the members of the Stevenson family resident in Edinburgh, and I have a goodly number of letters to her from Mrs Thomas Stevenson, Miss Balfour, 'Cummy,' the faithful nurse, and others, which were all treasured by my cousin.

RECOLLECTIONS.

JANE MACLEOD.

I can remember Robert Louis Stevenson. The first time I met him was at an hotel in the North of Scotland, where we (Louis Stevenson, a cousin, and myself), at his request, improvised and acted a short play, or, rather, what might be called a glorified charade. It certainly amused us, and we must hope our audience were equally entertained. The details of our performance I cannot remember, except that there was, I think, the usual hotel scene, with arrival of visitors, so well known in improvised charades. My next and only other meeting, as far as I can remember, was at Mrs Ferrier's, the well-known and witty daughter of Christopher North, and the mother of Walter Ferrier, Louis Stevenson's intimate friend, who is mentioned in his *Memories and Portraits.* Miss Ferrier, Walter's sister, told me that people accused Louis Stevenson of being heartless, with which she could not agree, for when she went, not long after her brother's death, to visit Stevenson and his wife at Hyères, Mrs Louis Stevenson met her at the station, and asked her not to mention Walter's name to Louis at first, for he felt his death so deeply.

There is one impersonal incident that may interest your readers. A friend came to see me after a meeting that was held to determine what form the Louis Stevenson Memorial in Edinburgh should take. I remarked to her that many people spoke of the influence Louis Stevenson had over their lives, and asked her if she could define that influence. So she told me how once she had been very ill, and how much easier she would have found it to die than to live; then she thought of Louis Stevenson, and how brave he was, in spite of his ill-health, and she determined to summon courage to live. How little did Louis Stevenson know that he, living on an island in the South Seas, merely by what he was, changed the whole life of some one far away. I have often in public told this incident as an instance of the power of unconscious influence. I had the pleasure of repeating it to his mother.

MEMORIES.

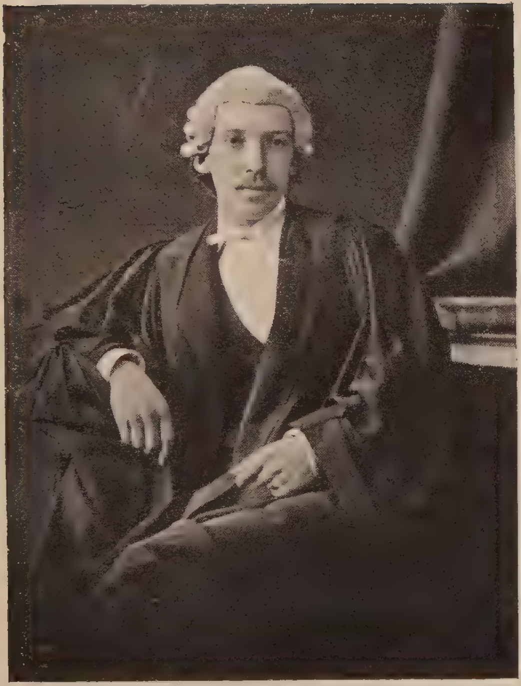
MRS ETTA YOUNGER.

SO much has been written already by those who knew Robert Louis Stevenson, that I feel very diffident about sending these few stray recollections of him. I used to be a great deal both at 17 Heriot Row and at Swanston, sometimes staying for months at a time; in fact, Aunt Maggie was most anxious to adopt me as a daughter; but I could not be spared from my own home.

One of the earliest remembrances I have of Louis was the way in which he made the Book of Job suddenly 'live' for me. As a young girl I was most interested in the first two chapters and the last of that marvellously old book; but all the rest—was of no interest to me till I heard him read it. Every night, just before going to bed, we used to go down to the dining-room and have biscuits and drinks, and Uncle Tom (without having anything formal or the least like Prayers) used to read us a few verses, generally from the New Testament. This night, I remember, something was said about the beauty and poetry of the Book of Job, when I chimed in, saying I did not understand it at all, and saw no poetry in it! Lou at once took up the Bible, and opened it at the thirty-eighth chapter of Job, which he read, and in such a way that it was a perfect revelation to me. Never can I forget the way in which his eyes sparkled, and the poetry he put into it. I was at once obliged to confess my utter ignorance, and how he had quite bowled me over; and this book of the Bible has 'lived' for me ever since.

About the first thing I remember that might prove of some little interest, is Lou coming to his mother the night before he was going up for his examination to become an advocate, I think, and asking her if she had a French grammar in the house. She managed to unearth quite a small beginner's grammar, and, on giving it to him, asked what he wanted it for. His answer was that it had just suddenly occurred to him that though he spoke French well, yet he had never learned the grammar, so he wanted to try and learn up what he could in the time! Needless to say, he soon gave it up, seeing that would be quite hopeless; and I remember Aunt Maggie being in such a state of mind thinking this would prevent his passing the examination. As it turned out, the examiner (whose name I forget) said it was a most extraordinary case, as Lou spoke French exactly like a Frenchman, and yet acknowledged plainly when the questions came to grammar that he had not learnt any; but under these unusual circumstances he could not help passing him!

I happened to be in the house when Lou told his father he did not want to continue to be a civil engineer. This was a great blow and terrible disappointment to dear Uncle Tom, as for generations the Stevensons had been all very clever civil engineers; and already Lou had gained medals for certain inventions of his in connection with lighthouses. And Uncle Tom was more disappointed still when Lou declared that he wanted to go in for a literary life, as Uncle Tom thought he would make nothing at that—in fact that it was just a sort of excuse for leading a lazy life! Eventually it was well talked over, and Uncle Tom said that if Lou would agree to read for the Bar in order to become an advocate, after passing the examination, if he still persisted in wishing to go in for literature, he would not prevent it, for then he would have a good, sound profession at his back. This is what Lou then did, and well can I remember the afternoon in which we drove into town from Swanston to hear the result of the



R. L. S. as Advocate.

(Lent by Mrs Etta Younger.)

examination. The excitement and joy was tremendous when he heard that he *had* passed, and was a full-blown advocate. We were driving in the big, open barouche, and nothing would satisfy Lou but that he would sit on the top of the carriage, that was thrown back open, with his feet on the seat, between his father and mother, where they were sitting;—and he kept waving his hat and calling out to people he passed, whether known or unknown, just like a man gone quite mad. I often wonder what impression it made on the passers-by, as Uncle Tom always used to have good horses, and liked them to go very fast.

After this Lou used to go and walk up and down the Parliament House, in his wig and gown (and I may say in passing, his mother, with much difficulty, persuaded him to go and have a photograph done of himself in this attire, a copy of which I now possess), and during this time he was offered two briefs, both of which he refused, much to his father's sorrow. Then he declared as he was not a briefless barrister, he was going to retire from the law, and devote himself entirely to literature. So, of course, then his father did nothing more to prevent it.

Well do I remember sometimes how anxious his mother used to be about him in Heriot Row, when the fever for writing was on him, and he would stop for no one; and how, when he refused to come down for meals, she used to send them up on a tray—which, long afterwards, I used to see outside his study door, not touched. He took the precaution to lock this door when the said literary fever was on him.

The summer that the Stevensons took a house up at Balmoral, old 'Auntie' (of R. L. S. fame) and I were asked to go up together to pay them a month's visit. One thing that rejoiced Uncle Tom exceedingly was that their address was: 'The late Miss M'Gregor's Cottage,' for, as he said, 'it was not every one who could be addressed round by Heaven!'

It was while we were there that Lou was writing *Treasure Island*, and as it was a very wet, cold, and damp season, Lou spent most of his days in writing, and after dinner he used to read aloud to us what he had written. Well can I remember his talking over the plot, and especially the plans which were drawn for showing how and where the treasure was to be found; and how his father used to suggest alterations and improvements. Little did I think in those days how popular this said book was to become in all parts of the world, and that I myself would first read it in print while travelling in New Zealand—with the consequence that I missed some of the most wonderful scenery, as I was so intensely interested in the book.

From LORD GUTHRIE'S *Robert Louis Stevenson.**

. . . IT was thus my good fortune, from personal friendship with Stevenson himself and with those in his family and social circle who most influenced him, as well as from intimate acquaintance with his early surroundings and his early friends, to be able to form, for what it is worth, a personal judgment of the man. I cannot honestly claim, more than others, that I was free from the bias caused by his personal fascination, and by such kindness, and even affection, to myself as made it difficult to turn anything but 'a warm side' towards him. But I had one advantage over most of his friends, in that I differed from him in politics, civil and ecclesiastical, and, to some extent, in our ideas of personal conduct. Yet he expressed our relation quite accurately in a letter to me, dated from Bournemouth, 18th January 1880, which ended thus: 'I remain, my dear Guthrie, your old comrade, Robert Louis

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* *Robert Louis Stevenson*, by the late Lord Guthrie, had its origin in a Lecture delivered to The Edinburgh Philosophical Institution by Lord Guthrie on February 12th, 1918. The Lecture was entitled 'R. L. Stevenson as I Knew Him—Bohemian and Puritan.' It subsequently was adapted for issue in the *Juridical Review*, and ultimately published in volume form.—[ED.]

Stevenson.' All his friends of early days, a fast-diminishing band, will agree in the description of Stevenson, which became a proverb in Samoa: 'Once Tusitala's friend, always Tusitala's friend.' . . .

I frankly confess I had not the vision, in college days, to foresee his future fame. I do not know that anybody had, except perhaps his mother and Cummy. But I can at least claim that I never mistook the husk for the kernel. The stories about his follies and the follies of his more immediate coterie, the true stories with a foundation in fact, but all of them grossly exaggerated and distorted, and the false stories, I knew them all. But I never doubted that he had the root of the matter in him; that, with all his surface frivolity and seeming pliability, if it came, in life's crucible, to a question of principle, a clear issue of right and wrong, Stevenson would prove as good as gold and as true as steel.

On a difficult question of discretion and prudence, or of legal right, there are many men I would have consulted sooner than Louis Stevenson; but on a nice point of personal honour, or on a question of generous treatment, I would unhesitatingly have placed myself without reserve in his hands.

Stevenson cannot be understood unless the abnormal strength of three elements in his elusive nature receive adequate recognition—the primitive or aboriginal element, the boyish element, and the Bohemian element.

His choice of Samoa as a residence, about which I shall have something more to say later on, will illustrate the first of these elements. When asked why he selected a place so remote from books and literary friends, he said: 'As regards health, Honolulu suited me equally well—the Alps perhaps better. I chose Samoa instead of Honolulu for the simple and eminently satisfactory reason that it is less civilised.' At another time he said that 'this business of living in towns was counter to the vagabond instincts that preferred a sack in the woods to a bed in a grand hotel!' . . .

Of the boyish element Andrew Lang truly observed: 'Stevenson was always a child, and always a boy. He never lapsed from the child's philosophy:—

"The world is so full of a number of things,
I 'm sure we should all be as happy as kings."'

His own view was the same. At Saranac, in New York State, referring to his futile efforts to make the penny whistle a vehicle for musical enjoyment, he wrote: 'I always have some childishness on hand.'

He was fond, in familiar converse, of small jokes, practical and verbal. His letters are full of them. Mrs Henley gave me a letter to her husband, in which he breaks off, in the midst of serious discourse, into a skit on his faithless correspondents, especially Henley himself, and Sir Sidney Colvin, then Slade Professor at Cambridge:—

'All men are rot, but there are two—
Sidney, the oblivious "Slade," and you—
Who from that rabble stand confest,
Ten million times the rottenest.

When I was sick, and safe in gaol,
I thought my friends would never fail.
One wrote me nothing; t' other bard
Sent me an insolent post card.'

THE LESSONS OF HIS LIFE.

Looking broadly and sympathetically at Stevenson's career, apart altogether from his personal charm, anything that may have to be entered on the debit side of the account will never balance his courage and his high sense of duty.

His courage! His whole life, what Mr Edmund Gosse called 'Stevenson's painful and hurrying pilgrimage,' was a triumph of the spirit over the flesh. It was not a mere question of bronchial affection, leading to infirm health. He was in the grip of hæmorrhage of the lungs all his days; he walked in the shadow of death from boyhood to the grave. 'Death had set her Broad Arrow' on him, as his favourite author, Sir Thomas Browne, put it. But he was never the slave of ill-health; it neither mastered him nor corrupted him. With splendid intrepidity he faced round on death, again and again, and beat him off. And in the end, after leading death a dance round the world, he got his wish, that he might die, as he put it, 'with my clothes on.'

In 1885, when staying in the Riviera, he had violent hæmorrhage from the lungs. He was unable to speak, and he wrote on a paper for his wife: 'Don't be frightened. If this is death, it is an easy one.' She ran for the drug which was only to be used in dire extremity. But she was too excited to measure out the dose. He took the bottle and the minim glass, dropped the prescribed quantity with perfectly steady hand, drank it off, and handed bottle and glass back to her with a smile.

Take another instance. 'The Requiem,' in two verses, is engraven in letters of bronze—the best bit of poetry he ever wrote—on his tomb on the precipitous peak of Mount Vaea in Samoa, 1300 feet above Vailima, alongside the thistle and the hibiscus, and with the words of Ruth to Naomi, 'Thy people shall be my people.' We all know the lines:—

'Under the wide and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live, and gladly die,
  And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:
"Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
  And the hunter home from the hill."'

When these haunting verses are read or sung, let us remember that, when he wrote them, he was lying in a half-darkened room, forbidden to speak. His right arm was in a sling, for fear of a return of hæmorrhage on that side: and he could only write with his left hand. . . . In face of such heroic scenes, and of his imperishable services to humanity, how contemptible all the chatter about youthful eccentricities and follies! In a letter to Baxter, George Wyndham called him 'a grand comrade against adversity, a complete foul-weather friend.'

Let us rather thank God for a Scotsman through whom, as through Scott and Burns, the world has conceived a new admiration and a fresh affection for Scotland. Did not Sir James Barrie say that 'R. L. S.' were the best-loved initials in the English language!

I cited also his devotion to duty. In a sense he was never free from financial anxieties; expenditure increased in Samoa more than kept pace with increased income. But, except for a brief period before his marriage, the pressing need of ready-money for daily bread never injured the quality of his work. He could always afford to be fastidious and deliberate in the selection and execution of his tasks. Yet he had even a stronger motive and excuse for scamping his work: not actual pain, but the weariness, which made the joy of life, and still more the joy of work, arduous to realise. No writing of his was ever scamped. He had as remarkable facility in writing as he had fluency in conversation. But, out of respect to himself, and his friends, and his country, he gave rare honour to his work; he drafted and redrafted, wrote and rewrote, corrected and recorrected, until he could no more. He knew what it was, as he said, 'to go up the great bare staircase of duty uncheered and undepressed.' He scorned what would merely pass muster; he strove continually for the perfect; he may even at times have painted the lily, and overfaceted the gem. And he was too sagacious to dream of sustained perfection. 'Perfect sentences,' he said, 'have often been written; perfect paragraphs at times—but never a perfect page!'

There is no more impressive lesson than the laborious drudgery of this brilliant creature, while learning his business, except it be his painful toil expended upon everything to which he put his name. He modestly said: 'I have only one feather in my cap; I am not a sloven.' Lord Grey's estimate of Lord Morley in *Chambers's Cyclopædia* exactly describes Stevenson's ideal and method: 'He feels that only the best is worth an effort, but that this is worth all effort; while indifference, and mediocrity of aspiration, are the greatest curses of mankind.' While retaining the characteristic merits of an impressionist sketch, Stevenson put all his thought and reading, and all his power of felicitous phrase, with lavish hand, even into casual letters. You feel that they have not been dashed off while carrying on a conversation, or when he was thinking about something else. This applies as well to intimate notes, such as those written to his old nurse, as to important letters for which he may have anticipated publication. Whatever his hand found to do, he did it with all his might.

WILL THE STEVENSON CULT ENDURE?

That his works will continue to be read, as those of a master of literature, and that interest will continue to be taken in his engaging personality, so physically frail and so spiritually ardent, and in his lifelong fight for life, is beyond doubt. But it is equally certain that new essayists, new story-tellers, new poets and letter-writers, with romance and charm associated with their personalities, will arise, and have already arisen, to divide and diminish his fame in future generations, living under different conditions and surroundings.

What will be his future rank? Men's ears have been dulled to the real merits of his delicate music by the trumpeting and drum-beating of some of his idolaters, of both sexes, on both sides of the Atlantic. No reasonable Stevensonian claims for him a place beside Homer, or Dante, or Shakespeare. They do not credit him with royal rank, but they claim for him a high place in the aristocracy of literature. Posterity must say whether, and how long, he will continue to wear the duke's strawberry leaves, and whether and when he must descend to the humbler insignia of the baron! Whatever betide, Richard le Gallienne's lines will never be falsified :—

'Not while a boy still whistles on the earth,
Not while a single human heart beats true,
Not while Love lasts, and Honour, and the Brave,
        Has earth a grave,
O well-beloved, for you.'

DR EDMUND GOSSE, C.B., LL.D.

Address to the First Annual Dinner
of the Robert Louis Stevenson Club, 13th November 1920.

I come to you in the light of my illustrious friend. This night, had the fates willed it, Robert Louis Stevenson might himself have been here receiving your plaudits and your congratulations on attaining his seventieth year. If posthumous honours are anything to the dead, he must be moved, his ashes must flutter with pride, at knowing that his native city has paid him the compliment which it has paid him to-night. I come as an emissary from the South—from the inhabitants of the *inferior* part of the island—to present their congratulations to Edinburgh on its graceful act in founding this prosperous Club. It is quite extraordinary that the Club should have succeeded so fully in so short a time. But the fact adds to my astonishment that twenty-five years should have passed without a tribute having been paid. There is, no doubt, the monument in St Giles's Cathedral to the memory of Stevenson. Of that monument I would like to speak as a spectator, but, alas, I went to St Giles's Cathedral this morning and did not succeed in getting in; I presume that Edinburgh locks up her Churches on Monday morning and forgets all about them till next Sunday. I was informed, however, that this memorial, though beautiful in itself, is not adequate to the interest which the city takes in her celebrated son. I regard the existence of the Stevenson Club, so energetically founded and so sympathetically supported, as a most encouraging fact. It is time, perhaps, that Edinburgh should show an interest in the fact that she produced the most beloved of all the authors of our time, and I do not know that in the history of our literature a more striking honour has been paid to an author than the formation of this great Club—it already deserves that name—within seventy years of the birth of that author.

There are persons belonging to the Club who remember Stevenson; but their recollections in most cases are slight. He must be thought of in those early days, not as a celebrated and admired author, but as a lean, ugly, idle, unpopular student, badly nipped by the east wind. Certainly those who knew him then were by no means impressed with the value of his presence. The reason why Stevenson had in those days very few acquaintances and still fewer friends was not want of friendliness on his part, because from his cradle he was friendship incarnate. A lovelier spirit or one more universally benevolent has never lived among us, but his health prevented his mixing in what is called Society. In later years, when his genius had developed, he saw very few people, and the intimate friends that he possessed could be counted on two hands. I would say that at the extreme, Stevenson could boast of only about a dozen intimate friends in the true sense. Time has worked cruelly with those friends. They have passed away, one after another, like clouds upon the mountain top, and very few of them are left now who can say that they knew him deeply and well; but the one who knew him best, the one who should have been here to-night in my place, Sir Sidney Colvin, to whom all lovers of Stevenson owe a debt which it is impossible ever to repay, is amongst us still.

My own relations with Stevenson were very close and they were singularly prolonged. I knew him first as long ago as the year 1870. When he was wandering about the Hebrides on the *Clansman*, she called at Portree, in Skye, where a singular troop of persons came on board. Among them was a venerable figure, with long white hair and remarkable cap—Professor Blackie; and another figure very well known to you was the painter, Sam Bough. Slouching in the rear came a rather ugly youth, and I do not know what extraordinary prevision made me take a violent interest in this young man. I had no opportunity of speaking to him then. In the course of the voyage we entered a loch at midnight, and, by the light of flickering torches, took on board a party of emigrants who were going to Glasgow *en route* for America. As they came on board an eerie sound of wailing rose in the stillness of the night, which pierced my heart; it was a most extraordinary sound. In the dark I saw that at my side was the young man from Portree, and we exchanged reflections on this extraordinary movement of human beings. I do not think we had any more conversation than that, for some four or five years later we were introduced in London by Andrew Lang, and we instantly recalled our former meeting and revived our memories of the *Clansman* and that curious midnight exodus. From that introduction until Stevenson's death in Samoa, twenty years later, we never ceased to be close and intimate friends.

I should like to say something about Stevenson's appearance, because that is a matter into which a very great deal of error has crept. In the first place I think very few of his portraits give any real impression of what he was like. Only two portraits resemble him, that of Mr Augustus Saint-Gaudens, which you have here, which is extraordinarily like what Stevenson was in his later years; and, slightly earlier, the curious, vivid, almost grotesque sketch painted by Sargent at Bournemouth in 1889. Most of the portraits are positively appalling. There was something very fugitive in his expression, something in the extreme mobility of his features very difficult for the artist who was not acquainted with his face, or had not the extraordinary gifts which Mr Sargent possesses, to catch. It was represented that his hair was black, and that now has crept into biographical notices. They speak of his coal-black hair. That is utter nonsense. His hair was brown, and when I knew him first it was almost light brown. In fact I might pay him the doubtful compliment of saying that it was no colour at all. No doubt as he grew older it grew darker, and under the tropical sun of the Pacific it is possible that it was baked to a very dark colour; but to represent him as having black hair is entirely false.

Stevenson was not very happy in Edinburgh, and yet not perfectly happy anywhere else. He was severe on the climate and architecture of Edinburgh, but when Glasgow people rejoiced he told them to wait a while, for he had not written his book about Glasgow yet. Stevenson told me that, as a youth, he used to hang over the Waverley Bridge watching the trains start southward and longing to start too. He shrank from the cold, for he was delicate; and he shrank from the somewhat excessive piety which surrounded him. But he loved Edinburgh with a passionate love, and in the tropical atmosphere of Samoa he was always longing to go back to the Gray Metropolis of the North.

R. L. S. AND *The Edinburgh University Magazine.*

GEORGE W. T. OMOND.

AS I am the only survivor of the three youths who founded the Magazine which contained the first published writings of Stevenson, your readers may like to hear the origin of that short-lived venture, and how he came to be one of the Editors.

In November 1870 Walter Ferrier, Robert Glasgow Brown, and I dined at Mrs Ferrier's house in Edinburgh one evening. The three of us sat up till a late hour making plans for a Magazine. A few days later Livingstone agreed to publish it, and we obtained promises of contributions from several 'Notables.' Lord Neaves—*Ultimus Romanorum*—had promised to write some verses; Professor Blackie, at an interview in his retiring-room, had exclaimed: 'Tell me what you want. I am ready'; Dr Joseph Bell, the model from whom Mr Conan Doyle afterwards drew Sherlock Holmes, was to furnish an article.

How Stevenson came to offer an article I do not recollect; but he was early on the scene.

In my diary (Dec. 1870) I find the following: '15th—Went to Livingstone's. Brown did not turn up according to engagement: so I fixed the colour and type of the Magazine myself—palish yellow, and Long-primer, No. 23. Then went to the Speculative, where met young Stevenson, and went over his article, suggesting some alterations, to which he agreed. Then Ferrier came in, and we read over a paper on "Preachers and Preaching," by G. Scott-Moncrieff: pretty well written.'

The Library of the Speculative Society in the University of Edinburgh is a long, narrow room, the sides of which are lined with bookcases. At one end there is a fireplace, and at the other a window, under which stands a glass case, containing the accounts kept by Sir Walter Scott when he was treasurer of the Society.* In another room, that in which the debates take place, paintings of Scott and Francis Horner hang on one side, with Lord Brougham looking at them from above the mantel-piece on the other side. Everything is redolent of the eighteenth century, of the nights when Brougham, Horner, Lord Lansdowne, Jeffrey, and a host of others, many of whom became famous men, declaimed on such topics as the National Character or the Growing Power of Russia. Some of the original furniture is still there, and the room is lighted by wax candles, as of old. It is a place in which a man, returning to it after many years, may linger in the dusk of a winter's afternoon, and call up memories of the past.

But those three students of the University of Edinburgh, on that day in December 1870, were full of the present and the future.

The Robert Louis Stevenson of that day was a slender figure of the middle height, in a pea-jacket; with something of a stoop, and inclined to be narrow about the chest; black hair, worn rather long; eyes dark, but very bright and penetrating, and always with a lurking smile; in one hand a meerschaum pipe, and in the other a bundle of papers, which he offered as a contribution to the new venture.

The record of that day in my diary continues: 'Lunched at 1.30 with Ferrier, Brown, and Stevenson, at Rutherford's. During lunch Stevenson read us No. II. of college papers. First rate.'

It was, then, in one of the little rooms at Rutherford's (these were simple days, and there were few clubs in the land), that Ferrier, Brown, and I, little thinking what a literary Angel we were entertaining, solemnly added R. L. S. to the staff of Editors, and the occasion was celebrated with such rites as the place and the years of the company suggested.

Of course it was rather an event in Stevenson's career having his MSS. actually printed, and, in his *Memories and Portraits*, he speaks of the Magazine as a 'piece of good fortune,' by which he was able to see his literature in print. He tells how all four editors managed the first number with much bustle; how he and his friend Walter Ferrier looked after the second, and how he alone was responsible for the third. 'It has long,' he says, 'been a solemn question who edited the fourth.'

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* Open at the page on which Sir Walter has spelt 'Tuesday' 'Teusday.'—ED.

Stevenson's contributions were: 'Edinburgh Students in 1824,' 'The Philosophy of Umbrellas' (in which Ferrier helped him), 'The Modern Student Considered Generally,' 'Debating Societies,' 'An Old Scotch Gardener,' and 'The Philosophy of Nomenclature.'

This business of the Magazine was Stevenson's chief occupation during the winter of 1870–71. He was *very* keen to see how the press would treat our effort. In my diary for 5th January 1871, I find noted: 'Hostile criticism of Magazine in the *Daily Review*: evidently written by that ass Kingsley.'

I recollect Stevenson standing in the hall of the Speculative with the *Daily Review* in his hand, and saying, 'This man is a damned fool.' But on 6th January I note, 'Favourable notices of Magazine in *Scotsman* and *Courant*.'

In April, 1871, however, this poor Magazine died a natural death. But any book-hunter who may chance on some stray copy of *The Edinburgh University Magazine* for 1871 ought to examine it, for it contains the first published writings of Stevenson. Should he wish to purchase it, he will find that, though it was originally sold for sixpence a number, and was largely used by its founders for lighting pipes, the market price has now risen to about ten guineas!

I knew Stevenson well, and, indeed, saw him and spoke to him every day for several years, but my closest work with him was when we brought out that 'University Magazine.'

One trifling incident occurs to me. Stevenson always read aloud to us what he wrote, and we went into it with youthful gravity. One evening he was up at my rooms with the others, and we sat till dawn —practically all night—when he left, and I can well recollect him stalking up towards Princes Street, instead of Heriot Row, on his way to some of the Old Town closes, and thence probably to Arthur's Seat, in his dark cloak and soft hat, and how he said a few days later that he had 'thought out' during that morning's walk something he was going to write. I wonder what it was?

Reminiscences.

SHERIFF MACONOCHIE.

I knew R. L. S. well in the early 'seventies, and for a number of years after that. I first met him at the house of Professor Sellar, when we were both attending Arts classes at the University. I sat next to him and the late Walter Ferrier at one or two classes, but I remember best our attendance at Professor Tait's Natural Philosophy class. Though while the lectures were going on we often spoke together when we ought to have been otherwise and better employed, no item of conversation has stuck in my memory. One very trivial recollection, however, is that in one of the fortnightly examinations we were asked to explain various terms, including 'the Arctic Circle.' Stevenson wrote a series of farcical answers, the only one of which I remember was, 'The Arctic Circle is an imaginary line drawn round the earth, its object being to keep the Polar bears within bounds.' He told Ferrier and me that he had actually sent in the paper, and at the time we believed him; but I confess that, after fifty years or so, I have doubts, as certainly no notice was taken publicly of the incident by Professor Tait, and I do not think that he was the man to suffer such a thing in silence.

As I did not join the Speculative till some years after Stevenson, I have few recollections of his work as an Ordinary Member, in fact I seldom heard him speak; but I am very pleased to think that I heard and enjoyed his well-known Valedictory Address. I am glad to hear from you that Lord Dunedin is giving you his recollections, as few are better qualified to write on that phase of Stevenson's life than he.

Often as I have walked and talked with R. L. S. on the boards of Parliament House, I only remember one scrap of his conversation. He asked me which of the stories he had published I thought the best. This was, of course, comparatively early in his career as an author, and I answered, '*Thrawn Janet*.' He said, 'I don't know that you are far wrong; and which do you think has paid me best?' I said I had no idea, and he went on: '*The Black Arrow*,' which, I confess, surprised me. He then said: 'Some day I must take your name in vain in a book.' And this he did much later in *The Master of Ballantrae*.

One other occasion rises before me. I happened to be walking with the late Andrew Lang in Bond Street one afternoon. As we walked we came across Stevenson dressed in the height of the eccentricity which, as is well known, he at one time affected—a black shirt, red tie, black brigand cloak, and (I am almost certain) a velvet smoking-cap. He came up to us, but Lang said, 'No, no; go away, Louis, go away! My character will stand a great deal, but it won't stand being seen talking to a "thing" like you in Bond Street.'

I have only remembered these trifling reminiscences to show you how useless I am for your purpose. I have often regretted that I did not keep any notes in writing or in my head of Stevenson's conversation; but, in truth, we were young then, and I, at least, did not recognise to what heights he would rise in after years.

W. J. HERRIES MAXWELL OF MUNCHES.

Extract from a Letter.

. . . R. L. STEVENSON was a good deal senior to me at the Speculative, and I did not see much of him. I remember his reading an essay, 'John Knox and Women.' None of the members present knew much of the subject, but it was much criticised as being unfair to John Knox, and some member in his speech said that however much he might disagree with the writer, his style would win for him a place in English literature. . . .

R. L. S. AT THE R.S.E.

PROFESSOR CARGILL KNOTT.

ON the evening of the nineteenth day of May 1873, Robert Louis Stevenson read a paper before the Royal Society of Edinburgh. In the eyes of the multitude this Society is devoted to the study of science and the publication of the results of scientific research. Nevertheless it has a literary side, having been incorporated in 1783 by Royal Charter '*ad promovendas Literas et Scientiam utilem.*' Sir Walter was its President for the last twelve years of his life, and many of the eminent literary men of that time were among its Fellows. But it was as a student of meteorological science, and not as a literary man, that the youthful Stevenson laid his contribution before this august assembly.

I was an undergraduate in my first year, studying mathematics and natural philosophy and spending several hours each day in Tait's laboratory. Supplied with billets of admission from Tait, I was in the habit of attending the *séances* of the Royal Society and listening with awe to the potent grave and reverend signiors who gathered there on stated Monday evenings.

Glancing over the billet on the Friday, I noted the to me unknown name of Robert Lewis Stevenson (for so it was printed), and asked Tait's assistant who this was. The reply was, 'Oh, he's a madcap.' Years afterwards, when R. L. S. had attained his fame, I learned that these two, Marshall and Stevenson, as students, had been paired together in their laboratory work. The one was keen on all things physical, while the other's preference was for a lively interchange of thought on everything of human interest. In no respect the ideal student as regards regularity of attendance, Stevenson further tormented his fellow-worker by requiring him to tell in detail how the experiments had progressed during his frequent absences; and when he got weary of reading thermometers or of watching the galvanometer light-spot dance across the scale, he easily found some excuse for bringing Robertson Smith (at that time Tait's assistant) and John Murray together and set them arguing on the age of the earth or the destiny of man. The epithet applied to Stevenson was thus fully explained. All I then got to know was that R. L. Stevenson belonged to the well-known family famous for their lighthouses, and that his grandfather had built on the Inchcape reef the Bell Rock Lighthouse on which, as a schoolboy in Arbroath, I had frequently gazed.

As to Stevenson's capacity to present a scientific paper, the impression I received was that the mere idea was grotesque. Whatever of value might be in it would be wholly due to his father. Nevertheless I was strongly interested in this 'madcap,' who had preceded me in the Laboratory by about two years, and who was supposed now to be studying engineering.

At eight o'clock exactly on the following Monday the General Secretary, Professor J. Hutton Balfour, rang his little bell to command silence; and Dr Milne Home, Vice-president, called for the reading of the first paper:

'On the Thermal Influence of Forests. By Robert Lewis Stevenson, Esq. Communicated by Thomas Stevenson, Esq.'

Thomas Stevenson, rising from the benches on the Chairman's right, stated that as his son was himself present, and knew more about the subject than he did, he would respectfully suggest that the Society grant permission for the author to read the paper himself. The Chairman put it to the Fellows, and the permission was granted by acclamation.

From one of the benches on the left of the Chairman a somewhat lanky figure with pale face and dark hair came forward, dressed immaculately in evening dress, and with perfect grace and calmness took his place at the Reader's desk, from which he faced the Chairman at the far end of a long table. Round this table sat the secretaries—Balfour, Tait, and Turner, and other members of Council, such as Maclagan, Lister, and Buchan. It was a full meeting and the paper was read by the author from beginning to end. I cannot recall if any other than the Chairman complimented Stevenson on his contribution. Probably Buchan gave his blessing on this important communication from the youthful son of their esteemed friend, or words to that effect.

Dr Milne Home had however a special interest in the paper, which begins: 'The opportunity of an experiment on a comparatively large scale, and under conditions of comparative isolation, can occur but rarely in such a science as meteorology. Hence Mr Milne Home's proposal for the plantation of Malta seemed to offer an exceptional opportunity for progress.' This is not the place to enlarge upon the contents of Stevenson's one contribution to scientific literature. It will be found in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, vol. viii., pp. 114–125; and the middle name of the author now appears with the more familiar spelling, Louis. Briefly stated, what Stevenson set himself to do was to discuss various observations that had been made by others as to the effect of trees and forests upon the air temperature.

The paper is admirably put together, and shows that the author had read widely and with clear understanding of the problems discussed. He calls attention to the complexity of the question of the climatic influence of forests, and from a well-balanced discussion of observations made by men of high repute, he draws sound conclusions as to the insufficiency of the evidence that forests had such a great climatic influence as was generally supposed. He supports whole-heartedly Milne Home's proposal to utilise the plantation of Malta as a splendid opportunity for studying the problem, and suggests that the British Association or the Royal Society of Edinburgh 'might take the matter up.'

Two quotations may be given as examples of his early power of aptness of diction. In one place we read, 'The temperature of the air falls nearly fifteen degrees in five days; the temperature of the tree, sluggishly following, falls in the same time less than four degrees;' and a little later: 'This *thermal sluggishness*, so to speak, seems capable of explaining all the phenomena of the case without any hypothetical vital power of resisting temperatures below the freezing-point, such as is hinted at even by Becquerel.' And again: 'Hence, on the whole, forests are colder than cleared lands. But this is just what might have been expected from the amount of evaporation, the continued descent of cold air, and its stagnation in the close and sunless crypt of a forest.'

MEMORIES OF R. L. S.

JOHN H. LORIMER, R.S.A.

ONE of my most vivid remembrances of Robert Louis Stevenson relates to the early days, when, as a student in the Board of Trustees' School of Art, I was drawing beside his cousin Bob Stevenson, known later as R. A. M. Stevenson—the brilliant occasional art critic of the *Pall Mall*, and author of an admirable short Life of Velasquez. This must have been about 1873, when, as a lad of fourteen or fifteen, I had entered on serious art study. R. A. M. Stevenson had taken his B.A. at Cambridge, and consequently began his art work rather late. However, there was a decided friendship between us, and we usually worked near each other.

Robert Louis and his cousin were closely attached companions, and sonnet and essay testify to the influence and inspiration which the more celebrated warmly acknowledged. R. A. M. Stevenson seemed to some of us to have a gift or art, hardly less notable, of placing the exact right word to express his thought.

At the time I refer to, Robert Louis was still in rather vagabond attendance at Edinburgh University, and he almost daily arrived to take his cousin out to lunch, his alert face beaming with some story or huge joke which he had been reserving for his companion, and the two would depart chortling and laughing.

Long afterwards R. A. M. Stevenson visited me at my studio in Edwardes Square, Kensington, and in talking of Robert Louis's work, he rather astonished me by saying 'Louis was not a good poet.' The remark made a curious impression on me, as I had always rated his poetry very high among his works. He seemed to think he would live by his essays and tales.

A few years later than the Gallery Meetings, I often saw R. L. Stevenson at gatherings of a Shakespeare Reading Society, to which my eldest sister, now Lady im Thurn, and I belonged. It met alternately at the houses of Principal Sir Alexander Grant, Professor Sellar, and Professor Fleeming Jenkin. Stevenson always read a part, and I still have a copy of *As You Like It*, with his name marked in opposite the melancholy Jaques. He read with a pleasant, sonorous voice, totally without affectation. He tells us he spoke with 'the drawling accent of the Lothians.' I suppose he did, and that the rest of us did. It seemed to me to be the speech of the ordinary well-bred Scottish gentleman, but not of one who had been educated at Eton and Christchurch and wished to pass for English.

May I say, as I have been a portrait-painter, and I suppose observed appearances accurately, that I entirely support the remarks of Dr Edmund Gosse, guest of honour at the first dinner of the Club. He objected to a description recently published by Lord Shaw,—that when seen with his wig as an advocate he had glossy black hair. That is certainly incorrect. He tended to be a fair person in general complexion, and his hair was light brown. He walked with a springy, slack, easy gait, but was erect. He did not look in an anxious state of health.

At a meeting of the Scottish Arts Club, over which Lord Rosebery presided, the questions were discussed of the authenticity of portraits of Stevenson; what could be done by way of securing one for our Portrait Gallery, or of making a successful monument. The portrait by Nerli done from life in Samoa came in for discussion, and there was collision between Mr Hole, R.S.A., and me, on which the chairman remarked, as we were colleagues in the Academy. Mr Hole thought it was too rough and coarsely executed, creating an aversion in the spectator, and that a skilful artist could make something from memory and knowledge of his mind, which would be liker. My view was that though it showed him tanned and lined, and was roughly done, I could believe it was like what he had become, and so had a decided value. As there were no others, it was in fact a question not of what you would like, but what you could get.

When helping as one of the arrangers of the British Art Section of the 1900 Exhibition in Paris, I met St Gaudens, whose sympathetic mural monument is in St Giles's, Edinburgh. My introduction took place when he was at the top of a high ladder working on his equestrian group of an American general with an angel going on in front. He came down, and, as he already had his Stevenson monument in hand, was interested to find I had met him, and questioned me about him.

One of Stevenson's early companions was Frank O'Meara, an Irish painter of good promise, who died too early. This friendship belonged to his time at Grez, I think. He gave me an introduction to him the first time I went to Paris, and I enjoyed his delightful personality and good looks.

My First Meeting with R. L. S.

LADY COLVIN.

ONE summer many years ago I was staying with my friends the Rev. Prof. and Mrs Churchill Babington at Cockfield Rectory in Suffolk. Mrs Babington was a first cousin of Louis Stevenson, as he was always called then. I had come to rest and recuperate after a great sorrow and much illness, and one morning my hostess said to me, 'I am expecting a young cousin of mine to-day to come and stay here, I do hope you won't mind; he is a very clever, nice fellow, and I think you will like him.' That afternoon I was lying on a sofa near an open window when I saw a slim youth in a black velvet jacket and straw hat, with a knapsack on his back, walking up the avenue. 'Here is your cousin,' I said to Mrs Babington; and she went out through the open French window to meet him and bring him in. For a few minutes he talked rather shyly to us about his long walk out from Bury St Edmunds in the heat; and then my little boy, who was with me and had been staring with solemn eyes at Louis, suddenly went up to him and said, 'If you will come with me, I'll show you the moat; we fish there sometimes.' Louis rather jumped at this, and the two boys (for R. L. S. did not look anything like his twenty-three years) went out together hand in hand, and came back in a little while evidently fast friends. From that moment Louis was at his ease, and before twenty-four hours were over the little boy's mother was a fast friend too of R. L. S., and remained so to the end of his life.

Then the hours began to fly by as they had never flown before in that dear, quiet old Rectory. Laughter, and tears too, followed hard upon each other till late into the night, and his talk was like nothing I had ever heard before, though I knew some of our best talkers and writers. Before three days were over I wrote to Sidney Colvin, who was then Slade Professor and living at Cambridge, and begged him (with Mrs Babington's leave) not to delay his promised visit to Cockfield if he wanted to meet a brilliant and to my mind unmistakable young genius called Robert Louis Stevenson. He came very soon, and this was the beginning of that friendship which every one knows made so great a difference in the lives of both men, but more especially in that of R. L. S., since it came to him at the beginning, and at the very moment when he most needed sympathy and advice.

For nearly three years after this Louis wrote me long letters almost daily, pouring out in them all the many difficulties and troubles of that time of his life. A number of these letters have been published, or part-published, in the volumes of letters edited by Sir Sidney Colvin, and a great many more, too sacred and intimate to print, are still in my possession.

From SIR SIDNEY COLVIN'S *Memories and Notes of Persons and Places.*

. . . THE recollections that remain with me from the next few years are partly of two visits I paid him in the course of that first winter (1873–1874) on the Riviera; partly of visits he paid me in the Norwood cottage, or in another cottage I rented a little later at Hampstead, or later again in college rooms which I occupied as a professor at Cambridge; partly from his various descents upon or passages through London, made sometimes from Edinburgh and sometimes from France, after his return in 1874 to his now reconciled home. The points in his character these recollections chiefly illustrate are, first, the longing for a life of action and adventure, which in an ordinary youth might have passed as a matter of course but in one already so stricken in health seemed pathetically vain; next, his inborn faculty—a very much rarer gift—as an artist in letters, and the scrupulous self-training by which almost from boyhood he had been privately disciplining it; then the intensely, quite exceptionally, observing and loving interest he took in young children: and above all, that magic power he had of winning the delighted affection, the immediate confidence, of men and women of the most various sorts and conditions, always excepting those hide-bound in starched propriety or conventional officialdom, whom he had a scarce less unfailing power of putting against him at first sight. . . .

His shabby clothes came partly from lack of cash, partly from lack of care, partly, as I think I have said elsewhere, from a hankering after social experiment and adventure, and a dislike of being identified with any special class or caste. Certainly conventional and respectable attire, when by exception he wore it, did not in those days sit him well. Going with me one day from Hampstead to the Royal Academy Exhibition, he thought such attire would be expected of him, and looked out a black frock-coat and tall hat which he had once worn at a wedding. I can see now the odd figure he made as he walked with me in that unwonted garb down Regent Street and along Piccadilly. True, he carried his tall hat not on his head, but in his hand, because it chafed him. Also, being fresh from an enthusiastic study of the prosody of Milton, he kept declaiming to me with rapturous comments as we walked the lines and cadences which chiefly haunted him:

'His wrath
Burned after them to the bottomless pit,'

'Like Teneriffe or Atlas, unremoved—'

'All night the dreadless angel, unpursued—'

'Oh! how comely it is and how reviving
To the spirits of just men long opprest!'

It was while he declaimed these last two lines, the opening of a famous chorus in *Samson Agonistes*, that the gates of Burlington House, I remember, enfolded us. . . .

After his return from the Riviera in 1874 Stevenson was elected to the Saville Club. . . . This little society had been founded on a principle aimed against the standoffishness customary in English club life, and all members were expected to hold themselves predisposed to talk and liable to accost without introduction. . . . On his visits to London he generally lunched there, and at the meal and afterwards came to be accepted and habitually surrounded as a radiating centre of good talk, a kind of ideal incarnation of the spirit of the Society. Comparatively rare as they were, I believe that both his presences in those days and his tradition subsequently contributed as much as anything towards the success and prosperity of the Club.

STEVENSON AT THE START.

SIR SIDNEY COLVIN.

READERS of a collection like the present may perhaps be interested in some passages from the first letter (hitherto unpublished) which I ever had from Stevenson. It was written at Edinburgh on 15th September 1873, and deals with two quite separate matters. Since we had made acquaintance a few weeks before at Cockfield Rectory, the Suffolk home of his cousin Mrs Churchill Babington, this young aspirant and I had had several talks, in London or at a cottage where I then lived at Norwood, about a first experiment to be made by him in regular authorship and about the publisher or editor to whom it should be offered. To desert the family profession of engineering for literature had almost from boyhood been his unavowed longing, and he had for years been diligently training himself to that end, but so far none of his attempts had been printed except privately. It appears from his letter that I began by introducing him (a circumstance of which I have no memory) to the firm of Macmillan—presumably to the head of the house, my kind friend Mr Alexander Macmillan—and that for them, after abandoning for the time being an ambitious attempt on Savonarola, he was preparing, with much youthful diffidence and misgiving, an essay on some subject unspecified. 'My relief,' he writes, 'at hearing that I need not prosecute Savonarola you may imagine. I had already foreseen that it would take me from two to four years, supposing me to lay aside every other pursuit and the sin that doth so easily beset me. I shall incontinently betake me to what I had originally meant. I do not know if it will do for anything, it is a portion of what I hope to do afterwards and so I have a better interest in trying my hand at it. Suppose I can work it into anything supportable, should I send it to McMillan as he told me; and how should I address him? He is called "Macmillan & Co.," but "& Co." is hardly a christian name, and might send my modest manuscript through the hands of all manner of unsympathetic subordinates. I don't know (by the way) if I told *you* that he had told *me* to send my MS. to him and that he would recommend it to firms. (Be kind to my spelling—I don't know if there be two Ms. in recomend or only one; and have therefore betaken me to something like two Ms and a half—though that is scarcely a compromise). I do not know what to say quite about anything I may do. I am afraid to send anything I can turn out to McMillan. I know so well that it will be feeble and especially uninteresting; and yet I do not know if it would be quite fair to ask you to look over it first, and tell me whether, by sending it in, I should merely compromise the future. Please understand this one fact about me (for a *fact* it is) that I can stand honesty, and indeed I should be more proud of your honest refusal (as a proof that you know I can take the truth in good part, which I can, by God) than of any half-hearted acceptance. Please do not misunderstand me. I am always inclined to put things so that they seem overstated; but the above is no bravado: it is sober choice. And I do not know which answer would make me feel you more friendly, or make me more proud and pleased with myself.'

To this rather solemn overture there was no immediate practical sequel. The editor of *Macmillan's Magazine* accepted from him before long a substantial contribution on John Knox; but his first actually published article was one entitled 'Roads' and was printed not by the Macmillans but in Messrs Seeley's journal, *The Portfolio*, under the editorship of Mr Philip Gilbert Hamerton. The rest of the letter deals with a totally different matter. Stevenson, while a guest at my Norwood cottage, had been scandalised at seeing me eat oatmeal porridge for breakfast out of a common soup-plate, and declared that it must absolutely be eaten, *more Scotico*, with a horn spoon out of a wooden bowl or 'bicker.' And he undertook after his return to Edinburgh to find and send me a couple of such bickers, with their appropriate horn spoons, for the use of myself and any guest who might be under my roof. Accordingly his letter goes on:—

'I have been moving in the matter of Bickers, and had been, too, before your note—Bickers are not easy to get, I find; and in the meantime you will perhaps allow me to send you two that are not quite of a size. I shall prosecute my enquiries in the meantime and find

something else more worthy of a Professor of fine Art. I have added (and I trust you will thank me for the addition) two horn spoons. These spoons, owing to their being really the result of individual handicraft, possess a sort of patriarchal charm. Moresoever they are of so rude a workmanship that one feels himself, on seeing them, several centuries back in the cool, liesurely* middle ages—far from all bustle and fever of modern competition. I daresay you have heard the Scottish "taunting Jeremiah" against the unthrifty and idle, that they are like "neither to make a spoon nor spoil a horn." It seems to me, now, that the artificers of those that I sent you have simply spoiled horns. I hope you will enjoy the unvarnished effrontery of these merchandise as I have done. Please note the forlorn brackets that stand for adornments; and the melancholy bias of the spine in at least one of the two cripple implements that I have the satisfaction of forwarding. Again, please note the whistle in the end; that is to entertain peevish and refractory urchins. If your order had been for *luggies* instead of for Bickers, I could have shown you another device for the same laudable end, in the shape of certain small shot introduced between the two lines of a double bottom; so that by a judicious change of level, a rattling noise is produced, and a consequent peace in perturbed nurseries. . . .
Yours very sincerely, LOUIS STEVENSON.'

REMINISCENCES.

THE RIGHT HON. LORD DUNEDIN, P.C.

I have been asked by Miss Masson to write a few lines as to my reminiscences of Louis Stevenson. I am afraid I have not much to tell, but I feel bound to accede to the request, if for no other reason than that my recollections may partially serve to dispel a sort of tradition that seems to have arisen, that Stevenson was looked down upon and disliked by Edinburgh society.

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* *Sic.*—[ED.]

I did not know him as a boy: for although we both belonged to Edinburgh, and my parents knew his, I had been sent to English schools, so that the Xmas holidays represented the total of my sojourn in Edinburgh at that time. Though as I have said my parents knew Mr and Mrs Stevenson, they were not among those intimate friends who would be apt to find their way to one's home in the Xmas holidays.

I began to study law in Edinburgh in October 1872, and I was almost immediately elected a member of the Speculative Society—the well-known students' debating society of which Walter Scott had been a member, and which had on its rolls many names of men who had won distinction in after life. I found there—so far as bears on what I am writing about—Charles Guthrie, afterwards Lord Guthrie, Charles Baxter, and Louis Stevenson. Guthrie, if my memory serves me, was at that time the secretary, and was very keen about the Society. He busied himself in embellishing the rooms by forming a collection of prints of old members, and generally making the surroundings at once comfortable and dignified. He was older for his age than the rest of us, and I think did have a very early inkling that Stevenson was no ordinary mortal. I was a new-comer and had more or less to be introduced to the other members, and I have even now a vague sort of reminiscence that he told me that Stevenson had a brilliant intellect. I don't think he ventured to predict success at the Bar, but he felt that he had got something in him which was not ordinary.

Be this as it may, I have at least one very clear memory of a particular evening. I ought to explain that although we were both studying for the Bar, yet, owing to my Cambridge degree having excused me the examination for general knowledge, I was a little ahead of Stevenson in time, and we did not take the same law classes together. Our point of contact was through the Speculative only. It met once a week in the evening. Each member in turn had to read an essay; only one essay being appointed for each night. The member was free to choose his own subject. If the essay was not forthcoming on the appointed day he was fined a guinea. After the essay there was a discussion upon it. Then there was a debate on a set subject, with a member appointed to open and another to reply.

The night I remember it was Stevenson's turn to read an essay. I can't be absolutely sure, but I believe it was nearly the first time he had read one. His subject was a book recently published by the Duke of Argyll, called *The Reign of Law*. Now the Duke of Argyll at that time was a great name. He was well known as one of the most, if not the most, eloquent debaters in the House of Lords, he held a great position, and was obviously possessed of talent, so that the ordinary young man would be apt to stand very much in awe of what fell from him. Not so Stevenson. Naturally after the lapse of very nearly fifty years I cannot remember what were the contents of the essay. But I can remember as if it were yesterday the extremely bubbling and excited energy with which he banged and mauled and battered the poor Duke, till at the end so far as the essayist was concerned *The Reign of Law* lay in tatters on the floor.

After this I heard him take part in debates. My impression was that he was a ready and fairly effective speaker: but I have no recollection that in this department he showed any marked pre-eminence over the first rank, such as it was, of his contemporaries.

There was a long interval for refreshment between the essay and the debate, during which the members (an ordinary attendance would mean something from eight or nine to eighteen or nineteen) talked to each other. Besides this, the Speculative Rooms were in the College itself, so that those who, like Stevenson and myself, were attending law classes, found it very convenient as a place to retire and write or work when we had an hour or so to wait between successive classes. The result was that we became intimate. Then came the entrance to the Bar, and thus the same intimacy was preserved. But all the same, though intimate in a sense, I was not a sharer in Stevenson's real life. The lives that have been written will show what he was about in the year just before he passed. I was otherwise engaged, and the result was that, though very good friends when we met, we did not really see much of each other. Nor was I a likely confidant for his aspirations. I was interested in my profession—a profession which he frankly cared nothing about. I thought him very original in conversation: but I confess humbly, though quite sincerely, that I had not a prophetic appreciation of what he was going to be. It was only when he began to publish—and by that time he no longer walked the boards of the Parliament House—that we began to see that we had been friends with a genius.

And now as to himself in those early days. His ill-health was in the quite early days not yet upon him, and he was very cheerful and lively. I should say that so far from being shunned he was popular wherever he chose to go. It is true that he affected a very unconventional, not to say untidy, attire. He wore his hair too long at the back for ordinary taste, and he had a preference for velveteen instead of cloth which was not in accordance with the standard of the times. But he was so young and boyish-looking that he was not judged by the standards of a fashionable young man. Mr Macintosh (afterwards Lord Kyllachy) was a relation, and I used to meet him at his house; and I never saw him not greeted in any society he chose to enter—though from his own wishes he did not enter society much. His after life was passed away from Edinburgh, and I practically saw him no more. I heard of him often from his *fidus Achates* Charles Baxter, and also from Sir Walter Simpson, who was an intimate friend of mine. That he retained me in memory to even the last days is well enough shown by his asking Baxter to apply to me for advice as to the working out of the plot of *Weir of Hermiston*—an application which made me able to save him from a bad anachronism—for which service I duly received thanks through Baxter. Perhaps the anachronism may be of interest. The message I got was: 'A young man is being tried by the Lord Justice Clerk in a circuit town for murder. At the trial evidence is led which points to the real culprit being the Lord Justice Clerk's son. He will be tried by the Lord Justice General. What I want to know is whether the second trial can be at the same circuit town, or must it be in Edinburgh?' To which my reply was: 'As between the circuit town and Edinburgh you may choose which suits your story best. It could be at either. You do not tell me the date of your tale. But I have a shrewd suspicion it will be earlier than 1840. If so, he can't be tried by the Lord Justice General: for before that date the office of the Lord Justice General was a sinecure office generally held by a nobleman: who could not try prisoners. The trial must be before one of the Lords of Justiciary.'

I am deeply conscious this is a most shadowy sketch, but such as it is I give it.

MEMORIES OF R.L.S. AND THE 'SPECULATIVE.'

THOMAS BARCLAY.

I knew Stevenson well from about fifty to forty-five years ago, when we were members of the Speculative Society. My personal impressions of him varied so much according to his moods that I find it difficult to define them even to myself. In those youthful days I felt he was a *poseur* and a rather blatant protester against conventions, for many of which I had a respect; and he seemed to enjoy tilting against one's prejudices and any beliefs that he did not hold himself. But when he sometimes abandoned this attitude and, in a serious mood, let his own ideal of life come to the surface, one's impression of him changed; one felt a certain persuasive charm, and realised the broadness of his outlook on life, and the charity and appreciation of all sorts of mankind on which it was based. And one realised the acuteness of his intellect and his keen sympathy with all the faults and virtues of human nature.

We had then in the Speculative two members who presented a striking contrast. Charles Guthrie was scrupulously correct in appearance and behaviour, a respecter of conventions and social distinctions, with a high standard of conduct ruled not only by his own somewhat delicate conscience, but by a kindly anxiety lest he should cause offence or cause his brother to offend. Stevenson hated conventions, whether in dress, manners, morals, or beliefs. He admitted no authority but his own conscience, and cared little or nothing for general opinion. That Guthrie was not constantly shocked and horrified by him always astonished me. It is easy to appreciate Stevenson now in the light of his brilliant and sympathetic writings, but it says much for Guthrie's insight that in those early days he recognised better than most of us the genius of Stevenson and the virtues that lay beneath a manner of living that to him might easily have made them obscure.

Recollections.

JOHN GEDDIE.

'I can remember Robert Louis Stevenson'—but only as an elusive wraith in the crowd of other ghosts, mostly indistinguishable, that haunt, in memory, the streets of Edinburgh, as they were full fifty years ago. No doubt he was more 'kenspeckle' than other figures in that passing show, by reason of a certain exotic quality in form and colour, dress and bearing; although it is difficult to say how much of the impression of the R. L. S. of those days as a noticeable personality arises from actual remembrance, and how much is an emanation of later reading and fancy. Opportunities of closer observation were not wanting, if only one could have appreciated and seized them as they came within reach. During my first years in Edinburgh, in the late 'sixties, I lodged in Nelson Street, which branches off the east end of Heriot Row. My regular way to the office of the firm of Writers to the Signet, at the extreme west end of George Street, in which I was a law clerk, was along the division of the Row in which No. 17 stands; and sometimes I followed the pavement, and sometimes took the shadier side by the railings of Queen Street Gardens—sometimes, too, like Stevenson, I would 'ring the changes' of the different zigzag routes by which one could reach the higher level. Afterwards I went daily to work in a law office next door to 'Henderson's School,' in India Street; but this, of course, was years after Stevenson's schooldays there were over. I believe that my Nelson Street residence was contemporary with the period when he was serving a brief and perfunctory apprenticeship in the office of W. F. Skene, W.S., then in the zenith of his reputation as a Celtic scholar and historian. I repeatedly had occasion to carry documents and messages to the law premises in Hill Street, but cannot say that I have any recollection of noting the presence there of Skene's 'Idle Apprentice.' I knew that 'Stevenson of the Lighthouses' lived in the Heriot Row house whose door I so often passed; and that he had a son who was among the 'golden youth' of the city, and was paying desultory attention to law. But although I must almost have rubbed shoulders with him in our comings and goings over the same routes, and encountered him also in Princes Street, at the

Parliament House, and in the College Quadrangle, I cannot speak of being brought into touch and converse with him, or of taking special note of him—except on one occasion.

In the 'seventies I attended the Conveyancing Class of Professor Stuart-Tytler in the University. Stevenson and his *fidus Achates*, Charles Baxter, sat, when they were present at all, in seats immediately behind me, situated conveniently near the class-room door through which, if one cared, exits and entrances could be made without causing exceptional stir. The pair formed a curious contrast, in looks and manner. Charlie—one always thought and spoke of him as Charlie—I paid most attention to, at first; for one thing, he bulked larger, was tall, fair and burly, with what seemed to be an aggressively confident deportment; for another, he was the son of the Auditor of Court, to whose hands I often addressed, or carried, papers. Stevenson, on the other hand, gave the impression of a youth—he was two years my junior—willowy and immature, dark, gypsy-like and restless. It was the period of the walks, on Cockleroy, of 'Mr Thomson' and 'Mr Johnston.' Baxter told me, years afterwards, that the two frequently exchanged names, and he was never sure whether he was the 'Johnston' or the 'Thomson' of the fellowship. Their appearances in class were irregular in date and uncertain in duration. Other students came to pick up information valuable in their after-career, or to put in the attendances and pass the examinations necessary for passing through the professional gates. But these two seemed to be a rule to, and in a class by, themselves: they just came and went. The impression of *insouciance* may, however, have been deceptive—at least in Baxter's case; he had an extraordinary automatical faculty of picking up and assorting facts and figures.

One day, near the close of the session, when the final exam. was looming close at hand, when the lecturer was expiscating, in his exact and polished manner, some nicety of the Scots law of conveyancing—the concentrated virtue and potency residing in the word 'dispone,' perhaps; or the origin and development of the 'testing clause'—when every head was bent over a note-book and every pencil was busy, there was a disturbing sound at the door, and the truants bustled in. The voice in the rostrum fell silent, with a pained and patient inflexion; all heads were turned, some faces glaring indignation, others on the broad grin. The delinquents looked wholly unconscious of offence—indeed as if unaware that there were anybody but themselves in the room. They took their time to sit down in the seat in front of me; they gazed about them with a serious, faintly speculative air. And hardly had the lecture got under way again, when they rose up and went out, Louis this time leading and Charlie following. One was somehow reminded of a slim and graceful spaniel with a big bull-dog, jowled and 'pop-eyed,' trotting in its wake. It was their last appearance, and they left behind a spirit of unrest that made concentration on legal quiddities impossible. R. L. S. had flung down his gauntlet among the lumber of the law. He had defied it in its sanctum. Henceforth he might study style, but no longer Juridical Style.

Stevenson and the Fleeming Jenkins.

SIR J. ALFRED EWING, K.C.B., F.R.S., PRINCIPAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

I.

FORTY-FIVE years ago, when he was a young man just finding his feet in the world of letters, it was my good fortune to meet Louis Stevenson fairly often at the house of a friend to whom we both owed much. The friend was Fleeming* Jenkin, his senior by seventeen years, whose Life he was afterwards to write—the 'Cockshot' of *Talk and Talkers*—the Professor of Engineering to whom, half-a-dozen years before, had been entrusted the impossible task of making Stevenson an engineer. From the Professor's lectures Stevenson had been a sedulous truant: they were perhaps the least considered item in what he has called the vast pleasantry of his curriculum. 'No, Mr Stevenson,' said Jenkin, when asked for a certificate of attendance, 'there may be doubtful cases; there is no doubt about yours. You have simply *not* attended my class.' But Fleeming Jenkin was much more than an eminent engineer and (as I can testify) a most inspiring teacher of engineering. His interest in art, in literature, in personalties, in all that makes up life, was unbounded; his judgment was penetrating and sympathetic. He had the discernment to see promise of quite another sort in the casual youth to whom every professor was a joke and himself 'perhaps the broadest.' Stevenson had already met with some kindness at his hands, and counted on easy acquiescence when he asked for the certificate. But so honest a refusal startled him into respect. He saw for the first time the 'extreme dignity of goodness' which, with unfailing affection and equally unfailing shrewdness, fitted Jenkin so well for the rôle he was often afterwards to fill of confidant and mentor. And so began a friendship that did much to temper with sweetness and sanity Stevenson's early years of struggle and revolt.

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* Pronounced *Fleming.*

A foundation for the friendship had been laid before Stevenson became a nominal student of engineering. It was in the winter of 1868 that Mrs Jenkin, then a new-comer to Edinburgh, had discovered Louis while she was returning his mother's afternoon call. She has told how in the gloaming Mrs Stevenson had seemed to be alone, but suddenly from out of a dark corner came a voice, peculiar, vibrating, talking as Charles Lamb wrote. She stayed long, enchanted by the conversation of the 'young Heine with the Scottish accent,' and in leaving saw him clearly for the first time by the light of the street lamp before the door, 'a slender, brown, long-haired lad, with great dark eyes, a brilliant smile, and a gentle deprecating bend of the head.' She asked him to come and see them, and the reply was, 'May I come to-morrow?' Then she ran home and announced to Fleeming, 'I have made the acquaintance of a poet.' Louis came next day: it was the first of many visits to a house in which he found solace and profit and delight. Years after, in a letter written to Mrs Jenkin on the death of her husband, his postscript was a veritable cry from the heart: 'Dear me, what happiness I owe to both of you!'

I would wish these reminiscences to be in part a tribute to those two dear and notable people, to whom my own debt is incalculable, whom I knew far more intimately than I ever knew Stevenson. Whatever recollections I have of him are inextricably mingled with memories of them. To justify the inclusion of such a tribute in this volume, it may be said that their influence in forming the character of Stevenson was admittedly so great that those who admire and love him will wish to know more about them, to understand something of the causes of that influence and of the circumstances in which it took effect.

To both of them indeed he owed much happiness, and other things perhaps more important than happiness. It was a liberal education for any young man to associate with Jenkin and his gifted wife, an enriching experience, a sharpening of even the sharpest wits, a training of mind and taste, of manners and morals. The dullest visitor to the house must have been conscious of its atmosphere of distinction—intellectual, æsthetic, ethical. Some may have found the atmosphere too rare for comfortable breathing: but for Louis it was the breath of his nostrils. To the rebel of the 'seventies the Jenkin home was a haven, an oasis in a desert of convention and prejudice, whither he might bring his unrest, his self-doubts, his dreams. There he was valued, encouraged, criticised in a spirit of understanding, affectionately admonished, helped. Fleeming Jenkin had himself come through troubles; he had fought his difficulties with indomitable resolution, and already, though barely forty, he had won a place in his profession equivalent (so he told me when as a student I consulted him about the prospects of a young engineer) to that of a bishop or a judge. He had force, experience, maturity, had done much and thought much. His life was filled, one would have said, with an incessant round of creative activities. In partnership, both as consulting engineer and inventor, with Sir William Thomson—afterwards Lord Kelvin—he had wide and lucrative professional interests outside his professorship. The applications of electricity were then in their infancy: in that field and in others his mechanical ingenuity, his grasp of essential principles and flair for turning them to practical account, his aptitude for scientific research, made him an acknowledged pioneer. Edinburgh, and many other cities after it, owe to his initiative their Sanitary Protection Associations. But his active mind refused to confine itself to engineering. His writings on other subjects—economics, literature, the drama, Greek dress, English rhythms, the atomic theory, natural selection—are evidence not only of his variety but of his insight, of his ability to throw fresh light on anything he took up. His essays in the *North British Review* on Darwin's *Origin of Species*, on Munro's *Lucretius*, on Matthews Duncan's *Fecundity and Fertility* were so suggestive that in later editions the authors admitted their debts to the critic. He was always intensely alive, vivid, unflagging, virile, doing with all his might whatever his hand found to do—and his arm had a long reach. He seemed to enjoy every minute of work and play. His joy in living was reflected in his talk, which was always ready and forceful and often witty, and in his buoyant optimism. He was ever on the alert to do a kindness; a man of scrupulous honour; a moralist whose own life was his best sermon. He revelled in friendly disputation: would take hard knocks with unruffled temper, and counted—not always prudently—on his disputant's doing the like. Companionship with Stevenson was easy to one who had never lost the gusto of a boy, who in middle life kept the sense of drama, the love of romance, the simple frankness of a child.

II.

Fleeming worshipped his wife, and those who had the happiness to know her could well understand the worship. The only child of a distinguished civil servant—Alfred Austin—she had been brought up in an environment that developed her remarkable powers of mind and graces of spirit. Of all his pleasures I think the greatest was to draw her out, to provide opportunity for the display of her gifts, to direct on some suitable object the play of her delicate fancy. Her humour was as graceful as it was gay. I have never known talk that equalled hers in well-bred brilliance, in distinction of feeling, expression and thought. One has heard Fleeming described, in the looseness of a Savile Club superlative, as the best talker in London; but on occasions when his wife was at *her* best he was content to suppress himself and be her foil. None of the listeners would have wished it otherwise. Mistress of many languages, including Greek, she read much, and though she often followed the dictum which bids those who hear of a new book read an old one, she kept herself throughout a long life in discriminating touch with every literary movement. To hear her read verse or prose aloud was to enjoy a revelation of its meaning and music. What she was as an actress will be spoken of presently. Her households, in Edinburgh and in the Highlands (they both loved the life there, and Fleeming was a keen sportsman), always seemed to run on wheels: in domestic management she had the art that conceals art. A devoted mother of three sons, she lived to take pleasure in watching, as from a central eminence, her grandchildren reach maturity, gently contriving to help them shape their lives, unconsciously communicating to them something of her own nobility. She had the grief to see two of them fall victims in the War. It was only in 1921, at the age of eighty-three, that she was taken from us, mentally active to the last, responsive to new fashions of thinking in a degree that excited one's envy, an interested spectator of affairs and a deeply interesting commentator on them, kind and sweet and understanding as she had always been, maintaining to the end her thoughtfulness for others, her love of truth and beauty and goodness.

She wrote little, and said she could not write. There are published fragments which prove she could: an article on 'Highland Crofters' in *Good Words* for 1885; the account of her discovery of Louis;* some early reminiscences of Lord Kelvin;† these show a sure literary touch and make one wish for more. Her letters had always an individual charm, but I doubt if they would convey to those who did not know her that sense of her being a really great lady which came from her speech and her presence. I venture to copy two of them, far apart in feeling and in time. The first was written some two years after I had left Edinburgh for Japan. Fleeming and I were in frequent correspondence, and in a letter to him I had referred to a promise that she would write:

'I do not despair of Mrs Jenkin's letter yet. Perhaps it would be better to say "note" than "letter." A note is not so dreadful as a letter. It is a thing you write while you are waiting for dinner, or between the visits of two friends. Encourage Mrs Jenkin to think of it as a note, and then it will come.'

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* *Life of R. L. S.*, vol. i., p. 96.

† *Journal of the Institution of Electrical Engineers*, vol. xliv. (1910), p. 554.

It did come, by return of post:

3 Great Stuart Street, Edinburgh,
Feb. 13 [1881].

A note! Of course, my dear Mr Ewing, I can write you a note. One note? Twenty, if you would care to read them.

Why did none of you people who have been in distant parts, you and Fleeming, ever before tell me that it was possible to send a *note* to Japan? I thought it had to be a *letter* of eight sides on that thin paper which holds one's pen fast and lets all one's thoughts through! And so I have gone about quite sad, thinking that you would first be vexed with me and then forget me—unable to rejoice, as I should otherwise have done, in my exquisite tea-pot with the mouse atop—feeling quite ashamed before my dear little cups—Fleeming's paper-knife a reproach to me—the phonograph a pain—plays rapidly becoming unbearable: and all because I was never told that I could write a *note* to Japan!

Do you not owe me many apologies? Indeed you do, very many, very humble ones. Or is it I who owe them to you? Lest it should be so, I hasten to forgive you and to beg that no more may be said about it. Nay, I insist, and to prove to you that I am sincere in accepting your apologies I write this note, and perhaps shall write others.

Only I hear that you are coming back possibly. I shall be glad when that day comes. I shall love to be introduced to your wife and to the pretty baby, whose photograph I know by heart. I send to both my best greetings.

Fleeming writes you of us. My life goes on, busier and busier I think. The boys seem to want more of me instead of less. They are turning out excellently well. Austin is as good and gentle and kind as he is big. He is very happy at Cambridge. (Letters to Cambridge take much of my time. Cambridge has not the Japanese privilege of notes). Frewen and Bernie are at home still. This winter I am busy doing what do you think? *Lecturing*—giving health lectures to a class of poor women and girls, and Frewen does my experiments for me. We have plays, as of old. You heard of my week of triumph in London with the *Agamemnon?*

Jack barks. All goes on as usual. When you come to see us—as you and Mrs Ewing must come, when you come back—

you will not believe how long you have been away. You will have to count the six little teeth to make sure you have been away at all.

But my note begins to grow to a letter. Again all kind messages.—Yours, A. J.

The other was written a few weeks before she died, when she knew that the summons had come:

12 Campden Hill Square, W. 8,
Dec. 23, 1920.

My dear Sir Alfred,—You have sent me a most beautiful present—a most uplifting letter.

At first I felt as if it were too beautiful—that I had no claim to such praise, to such sympathy—and then, as I read and reread it, I more and more seemed to understand how you, so clearly seeing and judging, had seen that in me whatever was good had come to me from those with whom I had lived—my father and mother and then my husband; and so your beautiful praise became not my praise (though that is very precious to receive) but a recognition of my debts to them, and so to be rejoiced in with thankfulness. Fifteen years we delighted over you together, and then came the thirty-five years during which I have felt and known you would help me and my children—as I always have known. And now comes the wonderful praise which shows me that my life has not been useless.

It also helps me—coming now—by showing me that my friend, who can think, thinks much as I do of Death—a superb crown to life if we will but hold it in faith and courage.

One sees more deeply and hopes more highly as the strange hours pass. And one is happier if one is loved and thought of as I am, by my children and by my most faithful friend.

I shall try to send you a few words by and by. I shall not need to *try* to send you and Nellie and the little son my thoughts.—Yours, A. J.

Her husband had died in 1885, suddenly cut off when at the summit of his powers. Here is a characteristic letter from him, one of many received while I was in Japan. My wife had been gravely ill: I was anxious about our future; had confessed to low spirits, and used an engineering phrase about the 'permanent set' that comes of overstrain:

SAVILE CLUB, 15 SAVILE ROW, W.,
June 30, 1882.

MY DEAR EWING,—I feel a call to preach. 'Permanent set towards anxiety.' I must use strong language. No; you might be ill or worried when you get this letter, so I won't. But just give it up resolutely. 'The coward dies a thousand deaths' is applicable to every kind of misfortune as well as to death. And the Christian 'take no thought for the morrow' applies particularly and specially to this kind of thing. Live your life gaily. When misfortune comes, suffer like a man, and cast the suffering away as soon as you can; but a life spent in scanning the horizon for conceivable storms is not wisely led.

Our will is master of that sort of thing, believe me.

As regards bread and butter a man like you has simply nothing to fear. Come home as soon as possible. There is an immense stir and more coming. . . . I am collaborating with Ayrton and Perry in a big locomotion scheme whereof more soon. Gas-engine drags along slowly: its nose is put out of joint by this new electrical affair. We all flourish. This is not a letter but a sermon.—Yours affectionately, FLEEMING JENKIN.

Stevenson, as every one knows, wrote a biography of Fleeming Jenkin, to my mind one of his most perfect books. But the summary of his friend's character which he sent to *The Academy* immediately after Jenkin's death may not be so generally known. These are the concluding sentences:

'In talk he was active, combative, pounced upon his interlocutors, and equally enjoyed a victory or a defeat. He had both wit and humour; had a great tolerance for men, little for opinions; gave much offence, never took any. Behind these outworks of unresting, insurgent intellectual activity, his heart was deeply human and, in latter days, unaffectedly pious. He was of the most radiant honesty and essentially simple; hating the shadow of a lie in himself, loving the truth, however hard, from others. He had in his manners, with those whom he loved, a certain curative causticity, of which they learnt to be proud, and which he looked to have returned in kind. He would not nurse a weakness either in himself or in you. He knew you, and would not dissemble his knowledge; but you were aware that he still loved you, and that it was thus that he desired you to return his affection; hand to hand, not gloved. To those who did not know him, to people of weak nerves or of a vulnerable vanity, he was at times a trial. To those who did, who had learnt with what severity he judged and with what continual care he sought to correct himself; what tolerance, what wisdom, what loving-kindness, he kept at the service of his neighbours; in what a true relation he lived with his friends; in what proud and chivalrous sympathy with his wife and sons: to those the sense of his loss must be incurable.'*

Later, writing to Sidney Colvin from Honolulu in 1889, he says:

'I owe you and Fleeming Jenkin, the two older men who took the trouble and knew how to make a friend of me, everything I have or am.'

III.

Such were the friends under whose roof I made the acquaintance of Stevenson. I too had been a pupil in Fleeming Jenkin's class, having come up to enter the University as a student of engineering in 1871, the session after Louis had been refused his certificate. I was a youth of sixteen, who brought no introduction; but I soon became aware of the beginning of a friendly regard, which in my case owed nothing to truancy. An essay on the Relative Merits of the Wet and Dry Systems of Sewerage seemed to take the Professor's fancy. Here at least was no Stevenson. It was written as a 'weekly exercise': the week had been spent in diligent grubbing among parliamentary papers and statistical reports, and the matter was treated with a diffuseness which, after all, was not inappropriate. I think he liked my excuse (borrowed from Pascal's apology for the length of one of the Provincial Letters) that I had not had time to make it shorter. Anyhow, at the end of the session Jenkin surprised me by the offer of a place on the staff which he and Sir William Thomson were then forming as engineers of a great telegraphic enterprise, coupled with a promise that I should be released to continue my studies during the following winter. For a young man without influence or prospects this was an opportunity not to be missed. I went at once to London at their bidding, and set about learning how to make electrical tests in the cable factory, which at that date was a better school of electricity than any laboratory, returned to Edinburgh for a second session in the classes of Jenkin and Tait and Crum Brown; then again to London on the same mission, and from there later to South America—in three successive expeditions—to take part in the laying of cables along the coast of Brazil from the Amazon to the River Plate. This was in some sort an education, but it was not till 1876 that it became possible again to settle in Edinburgh and pick up the dropped threads of University life. From then till 1878, when on Jenkin's nomination I went as professor to Tokyo, I continued to work with him, mainly as assistant in various pieces of engineering and scientific research. Much of the work was done in his house, and one soon came to know the family, from 'Madam'—which in later years was Mrs Jenkin's *nom d'amitié* to all her intimates—down to Jack the terrier and Martin the cat. There were opportunities too of meeting the frequenters of the house, and of these the most remarkable—apart, of course, from Sir William Thomson—was Louis Stevenson.

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* *The Academy*, June 20, 1885.

To serve two such masters as Thomson and Jenkin was a privilege beyond estimation for a young man on the threshold of a scientific career. Thomson's genius was supreme; the better one came to know him the more one admired and loved him. With his greatness was mingled a beautiful simplicity, a modesty and consideration for others that made the doing of any service no less a pleasure than it was an honour. He was then President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, an office which often brought him from the west. In these flying visits, besides attending to the interests of the Society, he had to meet as best he could two claims that were in sharp competition with one another. He was Jenkin's partner in practical concerns that involved big responsibilities and clamoured for attention. He was Tait's partner in the authorship of *Thomson and Tait's Natural Philosophy*—a gigantic infant that seemed always struggling to the birth. Hence between Jenkin and Tait there was strife for Thomson's soul. In point of fact Jenkin did all that could be done to relieve his partner of business detail. But in Tait's eyes Jenkin stood for a malign influence dragging Thomson to earth when he should have been free to soar and float in the serene air of mathematics, at a level where Natural Philosophy might forget that it had anything to do with the affairs of men.

IV.

Into this firmament Stevenson from time to time would flash, erratic, luminous, arresting—a comet with no calculable orbit or recognisable period—liable to disappear for months, but in my eyes, at least, a distinctly heavenly body. I was five years his junior, and between twenty-two and twenty-seven there is a great gulf. This, apart from other reasons, made it the business of the younger man to look up. Already Louis had the glamour of the successful author; he was appreciated by *cognoscenti* though not yet popular. His essays and short stories were being taken by *Cornhill* and other magazines. I had sense enough genuinely to enjoy them. My admiration for the

The photograph reproduced here was given to me by the late Mr A. G. Dew Smith, who had taken it when Stevenson was thirty-five. It is of this photograph that Sir Sidney Colvin lately wrote: 'A certain large scale carbon print he took of Stevenson to my mind comes nearer to the original in character and expression than any other portrait.' Certainly no other recalls so perfectly the Stevenson I knew.

J. Alfred Ewing.

man of letters was real and ardent. But stronger than that was the attraction of his personality. There was a quality about his talk, his gestures, his smile, that was not only winning but extraordinarily stimulating and infectious. With other men—and women—you might be a pedant or a prig: with Stevenson you caught something of his careless gaiety. You were lightened, as a diver who had rid himself of his leaden boots. You might even then fail to come to the surface, and be only standing on your head, but at least you could kick out. You found yourself saying things that sounded almost good—things that made people laugh, apparently in good faith. It was very surprising, especially when one was young and not a little bashful. Next day the good things, and you, might seem dull enough; but with his presence the magic would come back. The dust of forty-five years has covered what he said. The words, the wit, the essence are gone beyond any hope of recapture; but the vision of the speaker does not wholly fade, the emotion of the moment can still, if faintly, be recalled.

I remember a sudden departure after one of the Jenkin plays. Stevenson was standing in the wings, ready to go on in the dress of a Greek Messenger which had been designed by Fleeming with a fidelity that excluded pockets. Louis had omitted to divest himself of a signet-ring he usually wore. Handing it to me he said, 'Wear it till I come off.' We forgot it that night, and next day he vanished into space, it may have been to Grez or Barbizon. Months passed before the ring was reclaimed. I think the occasion of its return was a walk made memorable by his advising me to read Meredith. I had some acquaintance with *The Adventures of Harry Richmond*, having followed them with a school-boy's eagerness as they came out in *Cornhill*. But I knew nothing of *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* till Louis put it in my way. He spoke of the love story of Lucy and Richard with an enthusiasm I soon learnt to share. That must have been shortly before a visit to Burford Bridge brought him almost to Meredith's door, and he sought leave, as Sir Sidney Colvin tells,* 'sensitively and shyly, not without fear of a rebuff, to pay him the homage of a beginner to a master.' In our intercourse if there was shyness it was on my side, and Louis was kind in allaying it. The hours flew, but what their wings were one cannot now tell. There was some common ground between us in enjoyment of books; there were my sea travels and a few modest adventures on the South American Coast—a shipwreck escaped, a revolution witnessed, an uncharted island passed close in the night and only discovered at dawn. We talked of the Jenkins: the affection we both had for them was link enough to establish a sort of brief intimacy. They were people too interesting, too unusual, not to be discussed by their friends from every possible angle of comment. He would tell me of some passage with Fleeming that had left him sore: there was no malice on either side, and only augmented admiration on his. The influence which Jenkin had exerted and was still exerting on him was very apparent. For Stevenson in his turbulent youth, questioning everything and impatient of authority, nothing could have been more salutary than to find so lofty a standard of conduct, so clear and simple a philosophy of morals, in a man who was no puritan, who loved and understood him, who cared intensely for the things for which he cared, and whose zest in life was equal to his own.

The meetings I recall took place in 1877 and 1878, when Louis had passed what he himself set as the limit of youth, five-and-twenty. It was the period between the *Inland Voyage* and the *Travels with a Donkey*. Stevenson was then in what, for him, was excellent health; happy in the steady advance of his position as a writer; his purse still empty, but a little money beginning to come in; his pen very busy. He had qualified for Advocate, but his pursuit of the law had ended with the examination. So far as he was professionally concerned, the ancient House of the Scottish Parliament had again seen the end of an old song. He had shaken the dust of that *salle des pas perdus* from his feet. There was a brass plate bearing his name on the door in Heriot Row, but it brought no briefs and none were wanted. He was giving himself whole-heartedly to letters and thereby building a monument more enduring than any brass. 'I have a goad in my flesh continually,' he writes at that time to Mrs Sitwell, 'pushing me to work, work, work. . . . I begin to have more hope in the story line, and that should improve my income anyway.' And to Colvin: 'I have been at home a fortnight this morning, and I have already written to the tune of forty-five *Cornhill* pages and upwards.' There was no need of any further apology for idling.

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* *Memories and Notes* (1921), p. 167.

Among these slender memories one thing comes to me very clearly which may be worth recording. There have been hints and innuendoes that in the young Louis high thinking went with loose living. Gossip is a lying jade; the wise man learns to judge people as he finds them. On board ship and in visits to the cities of South America—Cities of the Plain they seemed to a youngster bred in a Scottish manse—I had rubbed shoulders with men who did not ride their appetites on the curb. It is a type not difficult to recognise. I was sensitive to it, and even in Victorian days the smoking-room was apt to become a sort of involuntary confessional. In Stevenson's company I never saw a trace of laxity—vinous or other—nor heard from him a word that might suggest it. His conversation, whenever and wherever we were together, alone or with other men, was as clean as his books. In such matters no evidence will prove a negative. This note of a direct personal impression is offered for what it is worth: so far as it goes it is evidence, not rumour.

V.

My most frequent occasions of meeting him were at the Jenkins' private theatricals. By the time I came to know them these annual, or nearly annual, functions had become a great social event of the Edinburgh spring. The central figure of the plays was Mrs Jenkin, whose genius—no lesser word will serve—was their motive and justification. In his wife's genius Fleeming took open pride and infinite enjoyment. His own talents shone as producer and manager. To select, adapt, and mount a play, to drill and dress his very capable company of amateurs, to design costumes and arrange accessories, gave scope to powers he loved to exercise. He threw himself into it all with characteristic energy and infectious enthusiasm, with meticulous attention to detail and a rare appreciation of stage effect. Each year there were in general two plays, one following the other on the same evenings. The rehearsals went on daily for weeks, and finally there were five performances, two to audiences made up of artisans, servants, and dependents, and three to friends and social acquaintances. Plays were given from 1870 onwards in Jenkin's first Edinburgh house at 5 Fettes Row, and it was there that Stevenson joined the company. After 1873, when a Greek play had been presented for the first time—*The Frogs*, in Hookham Frere's translation—Jenkin moved to 3 Great Stuart Street, where a more elaborate setting became possible. There he engineered matters so that the end of the dining-room could be let down on hinges into the boys' play-room behind to form a stage, leaving all the dining-room area for auditorium. With various other devices in stage carpentry, this made a very perfect little theatre for performances which included versions, more or less curtailed, of

Twelfth Night, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Merry Wives*, *The Rivals*, translations of the *Trachiniæ*, the *Agamemnon*, and the *Andromache;* and also some lighter pieces. *The Taming of the Shrew* as well as *The Frogs* had been given in Fettes Row. For the first Greek play the dresses had been furnished by a theatrical costumier 'with unforgettable results of comicality and indecorum' (so says Louis). For the next Jenkin had dresses made to his own designs, having in the meantime discovered for himself how the Greeks did their tailoring—a discovery which he made partly by experiments 'with sheets and lay-figures, and later with shawls and real women,' and partly by studying sculptures in the British Museum. I cannot say whether his theories of the *chiton* and *diploïs* and *peplos* were sound: in any case the results were extremely graceful, and certainly decent.

Of Mrs Jenkin's range and power in dramatic interpretation a vivid impression remains, but an impression difficult in any measure to convey. One felt, and feels, certain that had she sought fame on the professional stage she would have found it given without stint. She was delightful in comedy, but it was in the simple cumulative tragedy of the Greeks that she was at her greatest. To see her then was to be profoundly moved: it was also to be allowed a glimpse into what Greek drama really is, into the secret of its perpetual appeal. Let me quote the opinion of two authorities much more competent to speak than I. Sir Sidney Colvin, in the chapter of his recent *Memories and Notes* which is devoted to 'Fleeming and Anne Jenkin,' says: 'Those of us who had the privilege of seeing and hearing her will never forget the experience. . . . To hear her declaim dramatic verse was to enjoy that art in its very perfection. And her gift of dramatic gesture was not less striking. Recalling her, for instance, in the part of Clytemnestra, I can vouch for having seen on no stage anything of greater—on the English stage nothing of equal—power and distinction.' And Louis has written: 'As for Mrs Jenkin, it was for her that the rest of us existed and were forgiven.'

During the dozen years or so in which plays were given the company underwent many changes. Among its members when I knew it, besides the Jenkin family and Louis Stevenson, were Mrs Jenkin's mother, Mrs Alfred Austin, whose refined dignity showed to advantage in various elderly parts, Miss Leila Scot-Skirving, Miss May Cunningham, Miss Ella Cay, Miss Lee, Miss Paton, Mr W. B. Hole, Mr Orme Masson, Mr Jules Kunz, Mr H. Blackburn, Mr A. Burnett, and others. Hole, then becoming known as an artist (his fame as an etcher came later) was very good on the stage—where he took himself seriously—and still better in the supper-room after the play, where he would sometimes delight us by giving free rein to his talent as a low comedian. No one who saw it will have forgotten his impersonation of the absent-minded entomologist who let one of his live specimens escape. Stevenson was no more than a fair actor. The parts assigned to him were as a rule of secondary importance; but off the stage, in the merry nightly gathering that followed rehearsal or performance, he took a recognised lead, bubbling over with inspired nonsense. He began, I think, as prompter, in 1871. Next year he figured as an 'inarticulate recipient' of Petruchio's whip in *The Taming of the Shrew.* By 1873 he was promoted to the part of Vatel, a cook, in *My Son-in-Law*, a translation of *Le Gendre de M. Poirier*, and to that of Aeschylus in a curtailed version of *The Frogs.* In 1875 he was the Duke in *Twelfth Night*, and it was then he wrote to Mrs Sitwell:

'I play Orsino every day, in all the pomp of Solomon—splendid Francis-the-First clothes, heavy with gold and stage jewellery. I play it ill enough, I believe;

but me and the clothes, and the wedding wherewith the clothes and me are reconciled, produce every night a thrill of admiration. Our cook told my mother (there's a servants' night, you know) that she and the housemaid were "just prood to be able to say it was oor young gentleman." To sup afterwards with these clothes on, and a wonderful lot of gaiety and Shakespearean jokes about the table, is something to live for.'

But Louis did not tell how very literally he obeyed on that occasion his own opening injunction to 'play on.' At supper, when all was over—so runs the tradition in the Jenkin family—he continued to personate Orsino in a superbly ducal manner, improvising lines which Shakespeare might have mistaken for his own.

In 1877, when it was my privilege to join the company in the invisible rôles of call-boy and property man, the chief play was *Deianira*—the name given by Lewis Campbell to the first part of his translation of the *Trachiniæ* of Sophocles. Mrs Jenkin of course played Deianira. Her presentation of the wronged wife, led into fatal error by her wounded love, held every audience enthralled, and bore out Lewis Campbell's remark that there is no play which more directly pierces to the very heart of humanity. As produced, the play ended with the announcement by the Nurse (Mrs Austin) of the death of Deianira; our sympathies were not distracted by the final appearance of Heracles in his last agony.

Deianira was followed, for a lighter course, by *Art and Nature*, which was an adapted version of Charles Reade's *Masks and Faces*. Mrs Jenkin passed with consummate art from the stricken house of Heracles to the Green Room of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, where she became the flippant, kind-hearted Peg Woffington. Stevenson was the Messenger in the Greek play; he had a more considerable part in the comedy as Sir Charles Pomander. Of his performance on the stage I can recall little, save that as the officious old messenger he sustained with spirit an altercation with Lychas (Mr Hole), in which, after much bluffing, Lychas is forced to admit the truth about the captive Iole. But there was an awful moment, entirely unrehearsed, when the 'streak of Puck' that was in Louis got the better of him and he raised the curtain on a scene not in the play. That story should be told—I hope will be told—by one who saw the scene from the front. It was a chastened Puck who emerged, some minutes later, from a private interview with the manager.

My duties, which were many, required me to procure each night from the kitchen a practicable and really eatable pie for consumption by the family of Triplet; and also to disturb at necessary intervals, always discreetly and at the last minute, various promising flirtations on the stairs. They did not debar me from a full and lively enjoyment of what Louis has described as 'a long and exciting holiday in mirthful company.' But they were no sinecure when, in the late autumn of the same year, the *Deianira* was repeated in St Andrews, with nearly all the original company and stage effects. The stage had to be erected in the Town Hall there, the scenery and properties transferred, down to 'the wig which Stevenson wore, a venerable, straight-haired white wig' (so my list has it)—and all this before the return of Jenkin at the eleventh hour from his Highland holiday.

That was the last occasion on which Stevenson actually took part in the plays.* In 1878 there were none. There were, however, great doings at a Bazaar for the University Cricket Ground, when we exhibited the phonograph for the first time in Britain—having made one for the purpose by help of a notice of

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* There is a small error in Sir Graham Balfour's Life (vol. i. p. 121) where it is said that it was in 1875 Louis last took part in the Jenkins' theatricals. He had parts in both of the plays of 1877.

Edison's invention which had been cabled to the *Times.* People crowded to see and hear the strange new thing. We applied it afterwards in researches on the nature of spoken sounds—a work which took up much of Jenkin's time and thought, but with which Stevenson and other members of the Jenkin circle had only casual connection, as supplying records for analysis. For the moment they were all *voces et prœterea nihil.* In the early summer Jenkin went to Paris to act as juror in the Exhibition, taking Stevenson with him as secretary. I had many letters from Jenkin in Paris, but none were written by the secretary. Later in that year I went to Japan and saw Louis no more. In 1879 the sequence of plays was resumed with *Antony and Cleopatra*, concerning which Jenkin wrote to me in October as follows:

'I suppose we sent you playbills of *Antony and Cleopatra*, but on my word I do not remember what we did or did not write. It was marvellously successful against all the predictions of our company. Never, never, did I see a more amusing sight than the faces of the company when they were told what the play was to be and which parts they were to have. I read the play as curtailed and arranged to the gloomiest audience ever collected. Hole and Louis Stevenson got up a little conspiracy to get it thrown over, because, as they said, the part was not good enough for Mrs Jenkin. This is a little condensed but not exaggerated. Then Hole thought Enobarbus was not a part. Then another most daring idea was letting Lewis Campbell, who had never acted in his life, take Antony. This was atrociously bold, but we had heard him read Shylock so well that we decided he was our best chance, and he at least was partly happy, but all his friends explained to him that he was a perfect idiot to try, and that in fact he was making an old fool of himself, so his pleasure was not unalloyed. Then twenty-eight people were required in all, and all their dresses had to be designed and arrangèd, and of course they all thought they would be guys. And when Hole first appeared he certainly *was*, and he was furious when I told him the dress was very unbecoming, although he had himself told me it was horrible. However I polished him up till he was quite beautiful and strutted with enormous satisfaction to himself and with the approval of the house. Indeed I got all the men to look very well, which is difficult with classical costume. I went for bare knees and arms *à la* Highlander. This made an immense difference from the usual stage Roman. Then I gave them all long handsome buff boots laced up the front (as high as a Highlander's stocking). This looked noble, and with the properly cut tunics *à la* Alma Tadema, and tremendous Saga (or military cloaks), swords, belts, helmets, and so forth, it was gorgeous, and they all felt it so, and held up their heads instead of sneaking about like supernumeraries. Mrs Jenkin was incredibly fine: it is of no use trying to describe it. The fifth Act and the end of the fourth were the finest things she has done yet. The scene where the messenger brings the news from Rome of Antony's marriage was the one which each night secured the success of the play—Scene V., Act II. Up to that time people were pleased and, to their own amazement, interested, but this scene was something for which they were so wholly unprepared that the excitement became tremendous. Cleopatra was swathed in a sort of huge shawl of dusky purple and had on an Egyptian-looking head-dress of Cretan embroidery. Her dash at the messenger was one of the finest things in athletics you ever saw: it fairly frightened people, let alone Mr M. C. Smith himself, who however got used to it—but for rage you never saw anything like it. Then the banqueting scene acted uncommonly well. Kunz was an admirable Lepidus and young Charles Hallard sang the song to a good old tune found by Hole. It made both a lively and a most picturesque scene. Lewis

Campbell was better than any one else we could have had as Antony and acted with great fire. He was not however very successful with the audience. It would be a long business to analyse the why. However he in no way spoilt the play, and any one else we could command would have done so. All my twenty-eight came round (except Louis Stevenson, who was ill and had to go away and never saw it), and in the end I never had so enthusiastic a company. At the supper Hole made me the sweetest speech, thanking me for having made him successful at last, and we were all extremely happy. Your part was taken by five people —one to each Act—but the five were not worth you. . . . Austin [his eldest son] did a small part extremely well. We do not see that anything in the world is left for us to do now.'

However, they did find something, for next year (May 1880) he wrote to me of the *Agamemnon*, in which Mrs Jenkin took the two parts Cassandra and Clytemnestra: 'Our plays are successfully over. Mrs Jenkin surpassed herself. The Cassandra was more popular than the Clytemnestra—beauty being more appreciated than the rather objectionable power of the murdering woman. I had a triumph too in being able to show some learned friends that a dress-rehearsal audience of artisans and servants could be powerfully moved by a Greek play. Scholars have a way of thinking these productions beautiful but dull, and are almost insulted when told that any one but a scholar can admire them, whereas often the scholar has never seen at all what is most admirable in them—the human nature. Austin came out with extraordinary vigour. His mother's talent is now showing in him and he did much of the impossible part of the First Citizen quite admirably. . . . I have acquired the art of beard-making from an ancient Jew supporter of the house of Nathan. I am a very promising pupil of his.' And in November: 'We repeated the *Agamemnon* in London before some very distinguished audiences and had a great success. (Most of my actors new there).'

In 1882 the play was *Griselda*, one written by himself, which was afterwards published among his *Collected Papers.* In December he wrote to me again: 'I am desperately busy over Telpherage. . . . Also we are getting up plays: the *Andromache* and the *Merry Wives*, much cut down.'

Finally, in January 1884 (the year before Jenkin died), they gave De Musset's *May Night and October Night*, along with scenes from *The Rivals* and a revival, after an interval of thirteen years, of *La joie fait peur*, in which the Professor played the part of an old servant 'most beautifully.' In July of that year I remember going with him in London to see a trial matinée of *Deacon Brodie.* We sat beside Bob Stevenson. Louis was not there, but Henley hobbled on to the stage to take the call. The play had no more than a *succès d'estime.*

Let no one suppose, from the prominence given to the plays in these notes, that such *parerga* took Jenkin's attention away from more serious matters. All the while he was carrying on a busy professional life, teaching, inventing, writing, researching, preaching a gospel of sanitary houses, steering with conspicuous success a rich argosy of patents past the rocks and shallows of possible infringement and litigation. The letter that told me about the *Agamemnon* contains the following passage:

'Thanks for the congratulations on the Keith Medal and for your opinion on the paper.* I took the medal with a good conscience, for I confess to being proud of that paper. I have just done, all but the index, a little book on Electricity. The bigger one has now been translated into German as well as Italian. A French edition is coming out too,—all which makes me wish I had taken more pains with the original, especially in arrangement and wording. You will be amused to hear that with Jameson's assistance I still potter on at the old heat-engine . . .' The letter goes on to discuss experiments and cable business.

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* A highly original paper on Applications of Graphic Methods (reprinted in his *Collected Papers*, vol. ii.), which received the Keith Gold Medal of the Royal Society of Edinburgh for the period 1877-79.

The last meeting with Louis that I recollect was in the summer of 1878, when Jenkin asked us both to dinner to meet Mr Taiso Masaki, a Japanese official who had come to Edinburgh in search of a professor for the University of Tokyo and had swept me into his net. Mr Masaki told us the story of an early hero of the Japanese renaissance—Yoshida Torajiro—a story of patriotism and adventure, of sustained struggle and frustrated hopes. Louis was deeply stirred. He made some notes, got Mr Masaki to supplement them later, and finally wrote the story out as no one but he could have done. He tells there how the young Yoshida, when in prison and soon to be led to execution, took heart on hearing the words of the classic poem:

> It is better to be a crystal and be broken,
> Than to remain perfect as a tile upon the housetop.

Did these words, I wonder, appeal to Stevenson as a motto which might have application to his own short life?

Louis Stevenson in Edinburgh.

FLORA MASSON, R.R.C.

MY first recollection of Louis Stevenson is a hazy one, dating back to a bitterly cold winter in the 'seventies, when all Edinburgh was skating on Duddingston Loch. My brother, Orme Masson, and I were there one day, more or less with the Fleeming Jenkins; but Professor and Mrs Jenkin almost always skated together, on a little well-swept oval of ice, which seemed to have become their special property. Mrs Jenkin, easily tired, used to kneel in the centre of this, looking, in her close-fitting winter garb, the outline of profile against the white banks and jagged frozen reeds, the hands held in front of her in the small muff, rather like an effigy against the wall of an old church. And the Professor described wonderful figures round about his kneeling wife, circling and pirouetting by himself till she seemed to be rested, when they took hands again. Louis Stevenson came and went about them, skating alone; a slender, dark figure with a muffler about his neck; darting in and out among the crowd, and disappearing and reappearing like a melancholy minnow among the tall reeds that fringe the Loch. I remember that we walked home, several of us together,—but not Professor and Mrs Jenkin,—by the Queen's Park and Arthur's Seat all white with snow. Louis Stevenson came part of the way with us, walking a little separate from us,—it was a case, with us all, of heads down against a biting north-east wind,—and then turned off, by himself, across the snow, somewhere about St Leonard's, towards the Old Town.

My next recollection is a much more vivid one; of a dinner-party, at the house of Louis Stevenson's parents, in Heriot Row; one of those 'young dinners' that were rather prevalent in Edinburgh at that time. It was a pleasant little dinner, of twelve or fourteen. One or two sisters and brothers had come together; all were young members of families of the Edinburgh society of that day, and some were more or less intimates in the house in Heriot Row. It was my first visit there, and the first grown-up dinner-party at which I can remember being present.

Diagonally opposite, across the flowers and silver of that hospitable dining-table, I could see Sir Walter Simpson on Mrs Stevenson's right hand; and I have still in my memory the picture of the pretty mother, sitting at the head of her table, gently vivacious, and of the young Sir Walter, somewhat languidly attentive to her all dinner-time.

Our end of the table was, to me, almost uncomfortably brilliant. Mr Stevenson had taken me in, and Louis Stevenson was on my other side. Father and son both talked, taking diametrically opposite points of view on all things under the sun. Mr Stevenson seemed to me, on that evening, to be the type of the kindly, orthodox Edinburgh father. We chatted of nice, concrete, comfortable things, such as the Scottish Highlands in autumn; and in a moment of Scottish fervour he quoted—I believe *sotto voce*—a bit of a versified psalm. But Louis Stevenson, on my other side, was on that evening in one of his most recklessly brilliant moods. His talk was almost incessant. I remember feeling quite dazed at the amount of intellection he expended on each subject, however trivial in itself, that we touched upon. He worried it, as a dog might worry a rat, and then threw it off lightly, as some chance word or allusion set him thinking, and talking, of something else. The father's face at certain moments was a study—an indescribable mixture of vexation, fatherly pride and admiration, and sheer bewilderment at the boy's brilliant flippancies, and the quick young thrusts of his wit and criticism.

Our talk turned on realism as a duty of the novelist. Louis Stevenson had been reading Balzac. He was fascinated by Balzac; steeped in Balzac. It was as if he had left Balzac and all his books locked up in some room upstairs—had turned the key on him, with a 'Stay there, my dear fellow, and I'll come back as soon as I can get away from this dinner!'

I knew nothing about Balzac, and I believe I said so; I remember being sorry, and rather ashamed, that I did not know; and Louis Stevenson began telling me about Balzac, and about his style and vocabulary; and I felt grateful to the father for at least appearing to know as little about Balzac as I did, and to care even less. It may have been Balzac's vocabulary that set us talking about the English language; the father and son debated, with some heat, the subject of word-coinage and the use of modern slang. Mr Stevenson upheld the orthodox doctrine of a 'well of English undefiled,' which of course made Louis Stevenson rattle off with extraordinary ingenuity whole sentences composed of words of foreign origin taken into our language from all parts of the world—words of the East, of classical Europe, of the West Indies, and modern American slang. By a string of sentences he proved the absurdity of such a doctrine, and indeed its practical impossibility. It was a real feat in the handling of language, and I can see to this day his look of pale triumph. The father was silenced; but for a moment he had been almost tearfully in earnest. One could see it was not a matter of mere vocabulary with him.

Everybody now knows how strongly attached, for all their antagonisms of temperament, this father and son were to one another; but on the evening of this little dinner-party we were all living only 'in this thy day.' We have Louis Stevenson's own word for it. 'Since I have been away,' he wrote long afterwards, 'I have found out for the first time how I love that man.'

In the drawing-room upstairs, after dinner, there was a change in the atmospheric conditions. I sat with Mrs Stevenson on a sofa on one side of the fire; and when the men came in there was no more argument, nor, indeed, any brilliant talk. Louis Stevenson stood, facing us, listening to the talk and laughter of others, a slight, boyish figure, with a pale face and luminous eyes, one of a little group of men in the centre of the room. And certainly on that occasion Louis Stevenson wore ordinary, conventional evening-dress—'But not exprest in fancy.' Mr Charles Baxter brought a small chair, and sat down on it in front of the sofa where Mrs Stevenson and I were sitting; and, tilting the chair backwards, he broke off a piece of the wood, and instead of seeming sorry or apologetic, handed it with mock gravity to Mrs Stevenson :—'My dear Mrs Stevenson,' he said, 'this is what comes of having cheap furniture!'

Louis Stevenson, from where he stood, watched this performance, but took no notice of it; and Mrs Stevenson, with a glance round her drawing-room, laughed a contented little laugh, and laid the offending bit of walnut wood on the arm of the sofa beside her.

As everybody knows, Louis Stevenson was only intermittently in Edinburgh during the years that followed; its 'icy winds and conventions' always drove him away. He never looked really well or happy there, and I believe he owed some of his lightest-hearted hours to the friendship of Professor and Mrs Jenkin. One can scarcely imagine what he would have done or been without them. Certainly it is impossible to recall the Louis Stevenson of the 'seventies except as one—a favoured one—of that delightful Jenkin coterie.

Edinburgh has greatly changed since those days. When people launch on amateur theatricals now, they do it on a large scale, taking one of the theatres. But I doubt if these performances are as much an event, in the Edinburgh of to-day, as those dear old 'private theatricals' were, to which we were so hospitably invited in Professor and Mrs Jenkin's own house; where the audiences were packed, night after night, into the dining-room, and the wall between the dining-room and the room behind it was made to 'let down' in some mysterious way to form a stage, with a real curtain and footlights, and what not. And each successive winter there was the same pleasant secrecy as to 'what it was going to be this year'; if it were to be 'something of Shakespeare's', or 'from the Greek', or 'something new.' The members of the little company were always very loyal in keeping up the mystery to the last possible moment; and then, when it leaked out, there was always the important question, 'Which night are you asked for?' And afterwards there were no less important comments and criticisms, which indeed continued to crop up in conversation till a fresh fall of snow heralded the approach of our Edinburgh summer. And with all this I fear we were not always grateful enough for the immense amount of trouble that was taken to teach us what dramatic art might be under the domestic roof!

Louis Stevenson was not one of the chief actors in that little company. Yet, there are people who remember his Orsino in *Twelfth Night*—the slender figure in the 'splendid Francis I. clothes, heavy with gold and stage jewellery,' and the satisfied languor of his opening words:

> 'If Music be the food of love, play on.
> Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
> The appetite may sicken, and so die.
> That strain again! it had a dying fall.'

In one of his letters of this date he describes the performance with some humility, and the 'thrill of admiration' provided every night by 'me and the clothes.' There was always a 'Servants' night,' and the Heriot Row cook, it seems, had told Mrs Stevenson that she and the housemaid were 'just prood to be able to say that it was oor young gentleman.'

But it was not so much the play that Louis Stevenson enjoyed, nor even the 'thrill of admiration' in successive audiences, as to 'sup afterwards with those clothes on', amid all the Shakespearian wit and raillery and badinage that circulated about that supper-table. 'That,' he wrote, 'is something to live for.'

At the end of one of those performances of *Twelfth Night*, when the audience was thronging into the hall, and the carriages were being called at the front door in stentorian tones, we saw Louis Stevenson's mother making her way out alone, her pretty face still radiant with maternal pride. Louis Stevenson, one of a little group of the performers who were waiting, I suppose, 'to sup afterwards with those clothes on,' was looking down over the balustrade, half-way up the staircase. But in a moment he was down among the departing guests; wrapped his mother's cloak with an infinite tenderness about her, and then, escaping from the crowd's admiring eyes, fled up the staircase again. I can still see the upward look of adoration his mother gave him, as she went on her way among the departing guests, triumphant.

There are some humorous recollections of Louis Stevenson in the green-room. On one occasion I saw him walking up and down a little bit of the big drawing-room, looking each time he passed, in a dreamy, rather detached way, into a mirror that was hung on the line of sight. It was as if he were acting to himself being an actor; and then, apparently quite unconscious of the presence of others, he brought carmine and powder and began making himself up, peering gravely close into the little glass.

Another time he fell to disputing with a bigger and altogether more muscular member of the company as to which of the two could claim to have *the larger girth of calf.* Louis Stevenson was under the impression that his own was the larger; and so in earnest was he, and so anxious to prove his case, that he actually fetched an inch-tape, and his muscular friend found himself inveigled into kneeling upon the drawing-room carpet, while each, with much solemnity, took the exact measurements of the other's calf!

But once Louis Stevenson surpassed himself. It was in Greek tragedy. The curtain had fallen on a powerful and moving scene, amid the applause of the audience, and the stage was left in the possession of two of the young actors—Mr Hole and my brother—both in Greek garb. In a momentary reaction after so much unrelieved tragedy, these two, oblivious of their classic draperies, threw themselves into one another's arms, performed a rapid war-dance, and then flung themselves on to opposite ends of a couch at the back of the stage, with their feet meeting in a kind of triumphal arch in the centre. Louis Stevenson, who had been officiating at the curtain, took one look at them. He touched a spring—and up went the curtain again.

The audience, scarcely recovered from the tragic scene on which the curtain had fallen, gave one gasp of amazement, and then broke into a roar of applause. That roar was the first thing that showed the two luckless acrobats that something had happened. They leapt to their feet—only to see the curtain fall once more. Professor Jenkin, who was host and stage-manager in one, had been watching this particular portion of the play from the front. Without a word, he left his seat and went behind the scenes. 'Mr Stevenson,' he said, with icy distinctness, 'I shall ask you to give me a few minutes in my own room.'

Anybody who ever saw Louis Stevenson can imagine the little enigmatic flutter of a smile, the deprecatory bend of the head, with which he followed the Professor. What happened in that stage-manager's room? There was some trepidation among the members of the company, and a furtive whisper circulated among them: '*Can it be corporal punishment?*' And there was a general feeling of relief when Louis Stevenson sauntered into the drawing-room with a look of absolute unconcern.

But one of the little company—the brilliant, charming, irrepressible Leila Scot-Skirving (afterwards Mrs Maturin)—was interested enough to linger behind the others, and to waylay Louis Stevenson as he left the Professor's room. I am indebted to her brother, Mr A. A. Scot-Skirving, for the end of this anecdote.

'What happened?' she whispered; and Louis Stevenson whispered back: 'The very worst ten minutes I ever experienced in the whole course of my life!'

It was in two days of March 1878 that there was a big Bazaar in the Music Hall in Edinburgh, to raise a sum of money for a University Cricket Field. Professor Jenkin and Mr Ewing—now Sir Alfred Ewing, Principal of the University—had been reading in the *Times* a paragraph describing Edison's invention, and as 'Something fell to be done for a University Cricket Ground Bazaar', as R. L. S. has expressed it, the idea occurred to them to have a phonograph made in Edinburgh, by a firm of gas engineers who used to do experimental work for them, and exhibit it at the Bazaar. It was a memorable moment when the instrument was brought finished to Mr Ewing, and he first heard the magic small voice. Louis Stevenson called this phonograph 'a toy that touched the skirts of life, art and science, a toy prolific of problems and theories'; and indeed as soon as Professor Jenkin and Mr Ewing heard it articulate they began to use it for their own scientific work; but meantime it was the great feature of the Bazaar. Two phonographs had been made, one of which was raffled. Sir William Thomson (Lord Kelvin) was exceedingly anxious to obtain it, and bought a great many raffle tickets—and he won it. In a room off the gallery in the Music Hall (admission one shilling) Professor Jenkin and Mr Ewing took turns to give lecturettes, with experiments, on the phonograph. 'It is the realisation'—so runs the little old handbill—'of Baron Munchausen's horn, only more so.' In another room (admission half-a-crown) Mrs Jenkin presided, exhibiting the other phonograph to visitors, who were allowed to speak to it and hear the repetition of their own voices, and herself speaking to it a repertoire of previously rehearsed sentences which had been found specially successful for the purpose. Among these, I remember, were Hamlet's 'What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?' which the little voice repeated with dutiful precision, and the phrase of the moment, the British sentiment which had caught on,—'We don't want to fight, but by Jingo if we do!'—which gave away the phonograph completely, as a militarist of the deepest dye.

Some of us were there, giving assistance of the 'Walk up, ladies and gentlemen!' order; and my recollection is that Louis Stevenson came and went, watching the performance with an amused smile, more interested in the human by-play of it all than in the science of the toy. For did he not write later that he and Mr Hole treated the phonograph 'with unscientific laughter, commemorating various shades of Scotch accent, or proposing to "teach the poor dumb animal to swear"?'

And in that room off the gallery in the Music Hall there was plenty of by-play to amuse us all. I remember two ladies, apparently sisters, stately and demure, dressed alike in black spangled with sequins, who listened earnestly to Mrs Jenkin's mellifluous 'What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?'

'Ah, what indeed!' said one of the ladies, softly; and the other lady murmured: 'There seems to be no immediate response!'

And there was the burly, farmer-looking man, who threw down his half-crown and made for the instrument—and then stepped back, overcome by a sudden shyness. Mrs Jenkin hastened to the rescue with the unfailing question about Hecuba; but it was evident that to him, at any rate, Hecuba was nothing. He scorned Hecuba. The Jingo sentiment was more to his taste; but he wanted to speak for himself, to hear his own voice speak back to him. Once more he made a nervous plunge, pulling up his cuffs, as if he were going to fight the phonograph; and at last he bellowed into it with a mighty voice: 'What a wonderrrful instrrrument y' arrre!'

And back came the small Puckish voice, delightedly:

'What a wonderrrful instrrrument y' arrre!'

The burly man literally flushed and paled. 'It's no canny!' he muttered, turned on his heel,—and fled. I can hear to this day the light-hearted laughter and applause that followed him.

* * * * * * *

It was a good many years after all this had happened that one day, early in summer, I was walking with Leila Maturin in Princes Street. There had been great changes in Edinburgh. It had, of course, for some time seen very little of Louis Stevenson. And that brilliant coterie, of which he had been one of the most brilliant members, was broken up, dissolved. The survivors of that little company had gone on their various ways—I, too, had been away from Edinburgh—all had found their work in a busy world. Louis Stevenson's father, the dear old Scotsman with his strong fervours and prejudices, had been laid to his rest.

An open cab, with a man and woman in it, seated side by side, and leaning back—the rest of the cab piled high with rather untidy luggage—came slowly towards us, westward, along Princes Street. It was evidently carrying travellers to the railway station. As it passed us, out on the broad roadway (for Princes Street in the 'Eighties was not what it is to-day), a slender, loose-garbed figure stood up in the cab and waved a wide-brimmed hat.

'Good-bye!' he called to us. 'Good-bye!'

'It is Louis Stevenson!' said my companion; 'they must be going away again.'

Was this the Louis Stevenson of the 'Seventies, the boy who played truant from the college classes, the 'queer, lank lad in a velvet coat' whose brilliant talk had so perplexed and charmed us?

This figure, standing up in the open cab, waving the wide-brimmed hat, was an older man, an invalid, a wanderer; a man who had felt warmer sun's rays than ever warm Edinburgh stones, and had, I am sure, battled with harder winds than ever blow in Edinburgh. This was Louis Stevenson, the brilliant and distinguished Man of Letters of whom his native City was very proud.

The cab passed. The gray vista of our Northern Capital, the long line of Princes Street, was at its very best as Louis Stevenson looked back at it and us, over the back of the open cab, still waving his hat and calling 'Good-bye!' That little bit of west-endy, east-windy Edinburgh, with the gray and green of the Castle Rock and the gardens on the one side, and Princes Street itself, glittering in the sunshine, on the other! It was Edinburgh's last sight of Louis Stevenson, and Louis Stevenson's last look back at the City that was his birthplace, in which he had been so happy and so miserable; that he had chafed against and railed at; that he was to write about and dream about in exile, and to love immeasurably to the end.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

OWEN SCOT-SKIRVING.

MY earliest recollection of Robert Louis Stevenson dates from the time when I, as a boy of about fifteen, used to see him striding along Heriot Row; his age was then, probably, about twenty-one. Even to my boyish eyes he appeared a very striking figure.

I have seen it stated, by some one who probably knew him better than I did, that he had dark hair, also that he was ugly; but my impression is that in those early days he had fair hair, almost yellow, worn rather long; but the hair perhaps looked lighter than it really was in contrast to his dark eyes. He appeared to me handsome, certainly *not* ugly.

His dress was artistic and unconventional. He wore a black velvet coat with, I think, a white football jersey showing underneath.

When I was older, I used to see Stevenson in the Political Economy class at the University. At that time another frequenter of the benches of the same class-room was Dr Wallace, then minister of Old Grey Friars, and afterwards editor of the *Scotsman;* and I used to feel proud to consider myself a fellow-student, not only of our hero R. L. S., but of one whose sermons and ministrations I listened to on Sundays.

No doubt both of these highly intellectual men assimilated more thoroughly than I did the wisdom enunciated from the Chair, and appreciated more readily the aphorisms posted on the walls of the class-room:—

The man a better merchant,
The merchant a better man.

Only by labour can thought be made healthy,
Only by thought can labour be made happy.

Subsequently it was my good fortune to meet Louis Stevenson at Professor Fleeming Jenkin's theatricals in Fettes Row, where the Jenkins then lived.

These theatricals were an annual function, in Fettes Row and afterwards in the house in Great Stuart Street to which Professor Jenkin had moved, each house in turn being converted into a miniature theatre, the wall between dining-room and library being made to fold down to form a stage.

The Professor was stage-manager, and as such he collected a singularly able company of amateur actors, most of them being people of note, not the least of whom was Robert Louis Stevenson. Mrs Jenkin was usually principal lady.

My friends may wonder, as I myself have often wondered, how *I* came to be amongst such a galaxy of clever people; but I may explain that from the first I declined to take any part that required histrionic talent —call-boy, or a very tiny part, being my *métier*.

Most of us were greatly in awe of the stage-manager; but I do not think R. L. S. was afraid of him or of any one else.

On one occasion, finding he would be late for rehearsal, Stevenson sent his card with written thereon: 'Wait not for the withered rose bud.'

My sister was one of the performers at most of these plays—*her* parts were not, like mine, insignificant—and sometimes, after rehearsal, Louis Stevenson walked home with her and me. Needless to say he did not walk in the opposite direction from his home for the pleasure of *my* society.

We have a crayon picture by an artist forebear of a rather uninteresting boy; underneath the artist has written: '*La sorella di quello e bella.*' Probably for a somewhat similar reason R. L. S. tolerated my presence!

On one of these occasions when Stevenson walked home with us we invited him in. We found the household had gone to bed, so we could not offer much in the way of hospitality. We discovered, however, scones, jam, and milk; and on this stimulating refreshment R. L. S. got quite hilarious, so much so, that I said, 'Look out! You will have the Governor down.' My words were prophetic, as almost immediately we heard a door open upstairs.

I am rather vague, now, as to what happened. We expected each moment to see an irate, white-robed parent; but only a voice from above reached us—an angry voice, demanding who we were and why we were making a disturbance at such an hour. To this R. L. S., quite undaunted, replied: 'It's only me, sir; I am having small beer with your son.'

The voice from above said: 'You should be in your beds,' and the door of the now mollified parent then shut, and our spirits revived.

The above incident found expression in *St Ives*, in the scene where the girl and boy hide the escaped French prisoner in an outhouse at their home near Edinburgh, and bring him into the house at night to be fed, and while the feast is in progress a white-robed and indignant aunt appears on the scene, much to the discomfiture of the young people.

The Jenkin plays were performed before crowded audiences on three consecutive nights. After the last performance there was always a charming actors' supper, whereat there was 'a feast of reason and a flow of soul.'

Notwithstanding the lapse of nearly half-a-century—most of it, for me, lived under the sun of the *now* changing East—the remembrance of one such supper, at which Louis Stevenson was present, remains to me undimmed, a vivid and delightful memory.

Nearly all of those who were seated at that festive board were exceptionally gifted and brilliant, and some were beautiful. The wine sparkled, and eyes sparkled even more than the wine. There were songs and speeches—scintillating with wit—and Stevenson spoke, from the exuberance of his joyous heart, winged words and felicitous fancies, with fluent tongue and mobile lips, while the soul within shone from large luminous eyes that entranced and fascinated.

Of those who were gathered round that cheerful table possibly I alone remain, the others may all, perhaps, have passed 'over unto the other side.'

When I remember all
  The friends so linked together
I 've seen around me fall,
  Like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one who treads alone
  Some banquet-hall deserted.

. . . .

The eyes that shone
Now dimm'd and gone

. . . .

  And all but he departed.

Those who had thè privilege of knowing Robert Louis Stevenson and who still survive will ever cherish an unfading remembrance of his wonderful and glowing personality, while his written word, in prose and verse, will live for all time to enchant generations yet unborn.

Two Recollections of R. L. S.

SARAH E. SIDDONS MAIR, LL.D.

WHEN I call up remembrance of Robert Louis Stevenson 'to the sessions of sweet silent thought'—the man himself apart from his writings—two scenes present themselves to my mind's eye. The one is in the drawing-room of his dear friends Professor and Mrs Fleeming Jenkin, in their first Edinburgh home in Fettes Row.

There he stood up, a mere youth, glowing with poetic fervour, to recite a famous passage from *The Frogs* of Aristophanes. I always remember the Professor's emphatic whisper to my brother, by whom I was accompanied: 'Listen to that boy; he will be somebody yet,' or words to that effect. Truly the Professor was a Prophet that night.

The other rather later and more vivid scene stages itself in my Mother's drawing-room in Chester Street some forty-seven years ago, when a happy charade party amused themselves and the on-lookers by acting the two words *Shy* and *Lock*, and then, greatly venturing with portraits of Kembles and Siddonses looking down on them from the walls, summed up their charade in a representation of the Trial Scene from the *Merchant of Venice*. How well I recall that group! There stood Portia, my presumptuous self, pleading with the Jew (the late drama-loving Lord Kingsburgh, then Dean of Faculty), accompanied by the sprightly lawyer's clerk (Miss M. Dundas), and there Bassanio (the then young rising architect, Mr Sydney Mitchell), eager to offer 'twice the sum'; and there, too, Gratiano (the late Mr Alec Burnett-Crathes), with witty jibes badgering the unhappy Jew; and amidst them all, with gentle grace, the poetic figure of R. L. S. is seen bending slightly forward to address the Court in sweet, clear accents, declaring himself to be 'a tainted wether of the flock meetest for death,' who grieves not to give his life for his friend.

It was all very simply done—one end of the room being merely marked off as stage by a white tape on the carpet, and gowns and wigs lent by lawyer friends—there being no lady M.A.'s or B.Sc.'s or honorary LL.D.'s from whom to borrow in those benighted days! But for the fact of R. L. S. taking part, all memory of the little charade would probably long ere now have fled 'forgotten as a dream dies at the opening day.'

Irresistibly Comic.

MRS HOLE.

I have heard so often of the sayings and doings of Louis Stevenson from my husband, who, in the early Edinburgh days, knew and loved him well, that it is somewhat difficult to disentangle what I have been told from what I personally remember.

I have, however, one clear memory of him which I am glad to give you. I seem to see him now in the drawing-room at 3 Great Stuart Street one evening long ago. Mrs Jenkin had conceived the idea that *Samson Agonistes* might be dramatically treated, so she called together her little band of actors to see what could be done with it.

My husband was assigned the part of 'Samson,' Mrs Jenkin took 'Delilah,' Professor Jenkin 'Manoah,' and

R. L. S. 'Chorus.' My husband rejoiced in his rôle, and, as his habit was, memorised it, though I think it meant learning six hundred lines. We met with a gravity befitting the occasion—I can see us now, a rather solemn company—and the work of the evening began.

The poem went on in its stately cadences, the 'Manoah' had read one of his speeches, then 'Chorus' broke in. I do not know whether it was a spirit of mischief, or the sense of the ridiculous that waits on the sublime, which possessed him; but, after making a fair start—standing in the middle of the room, a striking, slim figure—Louis suddenly threw down the book, and laughed and laughed and laughed. It overset us all, naturally; but Mr Hole quietly waited till order was in some sense restored, and then went on with his great lines to the end.

'I had worked hard over them, I was not going to forego the pleasure of rendering them,' he said.

I think any one else but Mr Stevenson would have been quietly rebuked by our hostess for his wild interruption to our serious task. But R. L. S. was R. L. S. That is all that need be said!

It seems very remote and far away now. But they were keen and eager spirits that made up that little company, and the memory lives vividly with me to-day.

IMPRESSIONS.

SIR WILLIAM A. HERDMAN, C.B.E., F.R.S., LL.D.

MY acquaintance with Robert Louis Stevenson was of the slightest—and dates far back, in the 'seventies, when I was an Academy school-boy and he, I suppose, a student at the University, or possibly just beyond that stage. We only met twice or thrice, and always in the company of others. I never spoke to him, and I don't suppose he was conscious of my existence, although he knew my parents; but, as a small shy boy hiding behind others, or from a safe corner, I gazed upon him in a sort of fascination and was immensely impressed. The impression was a most vivid and lasting one. I can shut my eyes now and see him as the central and dominating and one distinct figure in a crowd none of whom are now recognisable although I probably knew most of them at the time. I have never seen him since those early days, and what I remember to have noticed then was a slim active figure, bright peculiar-looking eyes that fascinated me, and the mobile mouth to which all the people round him seemed listening. I don't know what the occasion was—some kind of afternoon gathering in a drawing-room—and I do not think I knew who he was till afterwards, but his personality was the one thing there that attracted and riveted my attention.

Then, about the same period, I saw Stevenson a couple of times acting in the excellent amateur theatricals got up by Professor and Mrs Fleeming Jenkin at their house in Edinburgh. I remember him in more than one play, but the one that stands out in my memory is *The Frogs* of Aristophanes, where he was one of the rival poets Æschylus and Euripedes contending in Hades for the judgment of Pluto as to which had been the greater man in Athens, and I recall the air of pride and conscious superiority with which he declaimed his verses, pouring forth line after line with increasing triumph as the scale descended in his favour—I thought it great! No doubt there were greater things that I missed. The only point of these early recollections of nearly fifty years ago is that they show how R. L. Stevenson when a youth impressed a small school-boy and one moreover of rather a scientific and practical turn of mind not much given to hero-worship.

BERNARD M. JENKIN.

Extract from a Letter.

DEAR Miss Masson,—I have received your letter about the Louis Stevenson Club. My recollections of Louis are only those of a very small boy, as I never saw him after the days when he came to our house in Edinburgh and joined in the acting there. I fear therefore they are of no use for the volume.

Though I have a vivid picture in my mind of the peculiar expression of his face when talking on one occasion to my Mother, it is difficult to put it into words,—the fun, vivacity, courteousness and daring curiously blended, with a smile that was enchanting, the more so perhaps because the corners of his mouth turned down, as I recollect it, and his eyes smiled even more than his mouth. Of what the talk was about I have no idea, no doubt I was too young to understand, but I know I sat enchanted watching the play of expression in his face. . . .

Recollections.

CONSTANCE BARCLAY.

MY father knew the Stevensons well and always took an interest in Louis, but I am afraid we young people were rather shy of cultivating his acquaintance because of his eccentric appearance in those early days.

My sister declares she perfectly remembers seeing him at a roller-skating rink clad in a velveteen tunic bound with scarlet, stretched upon a bench, reposing after his exertions! And I too vaguely recall the lanky figure throwing long arms about in the *mêlée*.

We did, however, once come into closer contact when he took the leading part in a French play we had translated. It was not a costume play, but Stevenson took the dressing-up seriously and studied effects at the mirror so often that another man in the piece—far from attributing it to the dramatic instinct—was irritated to the point of playing a practical joke upon him which went near to wreck the whole performance. During our few rehearsals this man lounged through his part, offering a colourless foil to Louis, who had the beau rôle; but when the evening came he astonished us all and convulsed us with laughter by a daring piece of comic characterisation—make-up included—which entirely took the wind out of Louis's sails and confused him so much that he could hardly remember his own part. It was too bad!—but not even Louis could help laughing, and as far as I heard he never showed any resentment.

Just one thing in connection with this play may be really worth recalling, because it is an additional proof of the way in which Stevenson habitually interested himself on behalf of his friends. He asked my father if he would give the fair copying of our translation, should one be needed, to a man he knew who was ill and in very low water. That friend was Henley.

R. L. S. AS AN ACTOR.

FRANCES H. SIMSON, M.A.

IN the 'seventies one of the features of Edinburgh social life was the series of theatrical entertainments arranged by Professor and Mrs Fleeming Jenkin. I can remember Robert Louis Stevenson on one occasion when I was privileged to be included in the audience. It was in his youthful days, when he had begun to let his hair grow long and to wear unusual clothes, and some of his cousins were inclined to look askance at his vagaries and feel relieved when he was out of town. He was not a regular member of the Fleeming Jenkin troupe, but he was no novice, and acted well on that occasion. The play was entitled *Art and Nature*, and was an adaptation of a well-known comedy, *Masks and Faces*, in which Mrs Stirling, an actress popular in her day, had made her fame. It had to be toned down a little, a very little, before the well brought up young person of that day could be allowed to witness it. Mrs Fleeming Jenkin took Mrs Stirling's part of Peg Woffington; the Professor was a broken-down artist, and R. L. S. a fashionable young fop, Sir Charles Pomander. Miss Leila Scot-Skirving represented a rustic beauty, Mabel Chester; the part of Soaper, the flattering art critic, was taken by Mons. Jules Kunz; and Captain Duncan Stewart of the Seaforth Highlanders was his carping brother critic, Snarl.

Mrs Fleeming Jenkin's acting made the deepest impression on me, but next to her I ranked Robert Louis Stevenson. His tall slight figure was well set off by his court suit of pale blue satin, and he played the part with a gay insolence which made his representation of the youthful dandy most vivid and convincing.

MRS MACLEOD.

Extract from a Letter.

. . . Mrs Stevenson, R. L. S.'s mother, was an old friend of my mother's—indeed, my mother had been her bridesmaid. But I did not really know R. L. S. at all well, for though I acted in Professor and Mrs Fleeming Jenkin's representation of *Twelfth Night* with him, I did not attend all the rehearsals, as I took the part of 'Maria' at two days' notice. I was only fifteen at the time, and it is one of my great regrets that I did not like R. L. S.! Is it not mortifying to have to confess it? Of course the judgments of youth are always harsh, and especially as regards affectation, or what seems to youth as such, and I think at that period he *was* self-conscious and rather a *poseur.* He did *not* excel as an actor, and was amusingly taken up with his fine clothes! Curiously enough my sister Florence reminded me only the other day that when I was telling her about the performance on my return from the Jenkins' that evening, and had repeated what I considered a fulsome compliment R. L. S. had paid me after my scene with Sir Toby Belch, I had said to her: 'I wonder, though, if I shall live to be proud of it, as if Ronsard had paid one a compliment.' So in spite of not liking him, one may have recognised genius!

STRAY MEMORIES.

SHERIFF SCOTT MONCRIEFF, F.S.A.

As to my recollections of Stevenson himself, the occasion when I really saw anything of him was in 1875, when he and I formed part of an amateur company which acted *Twelfth Night* at the house of Professor Fleeming Jenkin in Great Stuart Street. Stevenson was the Duke, I was the Captain and also the Priest. The rehearsals lasted some ten nights, and each night wound up with a supper, at which Stevenson shone. At that time he had written but a few magazine articles, and was still unknown to fame. But I remember feeling confident that he had a brilliant future before him.

I remember one summer evening, probably in 1875, going out to the Hawes Inn, Queensferry,—immortalised by Scott and Stevenson,—as the guest of the Court of Session Law Reporters, who were having a dinner there. Lounging at the door of the inn was a slim figure—probably in a velveteen coat—certainly destitute of stockings—he was wearing slippers. It was

Stevenson, who was at that time going in for canoeing in the Forth. He was no doubt asked to be one of our party, but I do not think he joined us.

As an instance of Stevenson's kindness, I may mention the following. A friend of mine was anxious to know the rest of the poem, if it existed, the first and last lines of which appear in the *Master of Ballantrae*, beginning:

Home was home then full of kindly faces.

My wife wrote out to Samoa, and by return of post got a kind letter, enclosing the verses—not then published. This letter, I remember, contained a rebuke for having N.B. on our paper. This was in 1894, the last year of his life.

I wish I could tell you more.

R. L. S. and Some Savages on an Island.

GEORGE LISLE.

From CORNHILL MAGAZINE, *December* 1921.

> 'We set off by way of Newhaven and the sea beach; at first through pleasant country roads, and afterwards along a succession of bays of a fairylike prettiness, to our destination—Cramond on the Almond—a little hamlet on a little river, embowered in woods, and looking forth over a great flat of quicksand to where a little islet stood planted in the sea. It is miniature scenery, but charming of its kind.'—*St Ives*, Chapter xxx.

THESE delightful and appropriate words were dictated by R. L. Stevenson six weeks before his death. They could only have been uttered by one who had loved Cramond and its surroundings in his youth, and they recall to me the earnest expression of his face and the warm love in his voice as he expressed the same ideas to me long ago. What a genius Stevenson had when, after long years of absence from these scenes, he could so accurately visualise this district of country which had charmed him ‘when all was young and fair.’

Cramond Island, or, as it was affectionately called by those who inhabited it during the summer months once upon a time, the ‘Isle of Cramond,’ lies in the Firth of Forth about three-quarters of a mile from the village of Cramond, which the Romans had held as an outpost at the termination of one of their many roads in Scotland. It is now within the boundary of Edinburgh. Dalmeny House is opposite, and the ruins of Barnbougle Castle, which, even before the castle was restored, formed a very distinctive feature in the landscape as seen from the Island towards the west, where now stands the over-shadowing Forth Bridge. The legend goes that Lord Rosebery, as a boy, had often been asked to whom the island belonged, and as it forms such a conspicuous feature from Dalmeny House he determined to acquire it; so he, shortly after he came of age, purchased it for £2000. The rental of the place is only about £30, so that the return to his lordship, after allowing for landlord's taxes, would not be more than about 1 per cent. About half a century ago the tenant was a poet from the Borders named Reid, who had published a volume of fairly good poems. He, however, let part of the houses which occupy the centre of the island to summer lodgers; and for people staying in Edinburgh no finer holiday resort could have been found, especially for children. The date of which I am writing must have been after 1875, because I find that the copy of *Robinson Crusoe*, hereafter referred to, was presented as a prize that year in Mr Henderson's School, a famous preparatory school in Edinburgh at that time.

At the top of the island there are the remains of a cairn which was, no doubt, built by the Picts or other aborigines and improved by the Romans, but of which very little now remains. Near this there was a favourite outlook tower, and one lovely afternoon of brilliant sunshine and strong west wind two canoes were seen by many anxious eyes from this vantage ground, struggling up the Forth from Granton in the teeth of the wind. There was a very good telescope on the island, and this was at once brought to bear on the canoes, which certainly seemed to be in difficulties. The sea was washing over the tiny craft, but the occupants were very persevering, and instead of running before the wind for Granton Harbour, seemed determined to come to the Island for shelter, although they were evidently getting exhausted. At one time they appeared to be in such distress that two flags were run up the flag-staff on the cairn to let the boatman at Cramond know that he was urgently required. Soon, however, it was seen that the canoeists were in calm water, and the S.O.S. signal was withdrawn. The whole available population of the island were not long in running down to the rocky south-east shore of the island to give the shipwrecked mariners a welcome. The first canoe to land was occupied by a lanky, cadaverous, black-haired, black-eyed man, apparently six feet in height but very slim, in a velveteen coat. His canoe was built of mahogany, with a deck of either cedar or mahogany; the other was a canvas canoe of a somewhat nondescript appearance; had it got upon the rocks it would not have lasted long. As I was the biggest of the lot of wreckers who had come to welcome them, the canoeists asked me if I would help them up with their canoes above high-water mark, as they had had enough sailing for one day and were badly in need of a rest. I was delighted at the job, and as I was accustomed to climb among the rocks and over slippery seaweed, and did not mind getting myself wet, it was not long before the two canoes were safely above high-water mark. He of the canvas canoe immediately lay down to rest in the sunshine, but the other before doing so thanked me in the nicest way possible for my stalwart assistance, and presented me with a shilling, which I, of course, with some diffidence and much internal joy, accepted. The canoeists rested for some time, but were not long before they completely recovered from their exhaustion, and then he of the wooden canoe proved to be a wonderful talker, a very easy 'speirer,' and sometimes a very difficult one to answer. Among other questions he asked of the half-dozen of us, who were all about the age of twelve—

'What other savages live upon the island?'

I felt somewhat nettled at being called a savage, and replied: 'You must have forgotten your *Robinson Crusoe* or you would know that it was the savages who came to the island in canoes. There were no savages till you came.'

Both voyagers laughed heartily, and he of the canvas canoe said to the other: 'You 're fairly caught this time, Louis!'

In thinking over the matter I rather imagine that it was after this remark that I got my famous shilling and not before it. However, they insisted upon seeing the text of *Robinson Crusoe*, where the two canoes and the savages are mentioned. I was too keen in examining their own boats, as I had never seen such things before, to go up to the house to get my *Robinson Crusoe;* but Annie Reid, she of the long pig-tail and blue eyes, always anxious to be the slave of any one who would employ her, volunteered to go and fetch the book, which she did, and handed it over to the unbelieving savages. I thought the beautiful book, with its brightly coloured frontispiece of Robinson Crusoe in a red cowl and blue jacket reading a huge Bible, and many other illustrations both in colour and in black and white, would impress the savages, but its effect upon them was far beyond my expectations. Stevenson gave a war-whoop like a genuine savage, and exclaimed:

'Oh shades of Cocky Henderson and the companions of my palmy days! I too was at this school in the days of my misspent youth.' And then burst out with great gusto into song:

> 'Here we suffer grief and pain
> Under Mr Hendie's cane.
> If you don't obey his laws
> He will punish with his tawse.'

This parody was current in the school in my time, quite recently completed, and had evidently been in vogue in Stevenson's day at least fifteen years prior. In fact, Stevenson may have been the author of it. The awful doggerel may have been part of his merry muses—a preliminary canter to *A Child's Garden of Verse.* He talked much of 'Cocky' Henderson, as he irreverently was called by some of his pupils. We both agreed in our estimate of Henderson, which did not coincide with that of our parents. There were other poets at the school, but none ever gave Henderson the credit for their development in that direction.

Annie Reid, in addition to the magnificent copy of *Robinson Crusoe*, also brought back with her the Lady of the Island, who gave the canoeists a talking-to for endangering their lives, and at the same time invited them up to the house to get their clothing thoroughly dried and to have some food. As there was a fine Ayrshire cow on the island, a very sumptuous repast of tea—fine fresh butter, scones, eggs, and plenty of creamy milk—was set before them, and we all enjoyed our afternoon. That was my first introduction to R. L. Stevenson, if such it could be called, and to his cousin, Balfour. We gave them a hearty invitation to come again, and that year they often did come. Their headquarters were at Cramond, although that day they had come from Granton. Stevenson's canoe was a very large roomy one, well built, and I used to sit on the deck portion behind him with my bare feet in the water, while he paddled; but he would often let me have the paddle. Although he must have been thirteen years older than I and appeared old to me, he seemed still to have a great deal of the boy in him. His cousin, Balfour, would take Tom Reid, who was somewhat younger than I was, and did not enjoy sailing so much as I did. Stevenson dubbed Tom 'Friday' and me 'Crusoe,' but would not allow either of us to go on the canoes very much until he saw that we both could swim. I think it was on that first occasion that I asked him to take me over to Mickery, but he said it was much too stormy, but some calm day he might take me; and eventually we did get to Mickery, but perhaps on too calm a day.

When Lord Rosebery bought Cramond Island (and, by the way, I may mention that, so far as I could ever ascertain, he has never put his foot on it, although his eye must often have lighted upon it), he built or caused to be built at the north-west point a heavy, solid building which we always referred to as Lord Rosebery's duck-house, and which, we understood, was to be used for shooting wild ducks. It is quite close to the seal rock, and might have been used for shelter for shooting seals, as they used to come and bask upon this rock—hence its name. Once Stevenson told me that a friend of his, a fellow-canoeist from England, had been touring in Scotland, and, being storm-stayed on the Island, like himself and his cousin, had written a book of his travels in which he mentioned that he had been thus storm-stayed and had had to sleep in a duck-house, 'a place for keeping ducks,' and had slept very well all night. Next time Stevenson called at the island he brought the book, as I had produced my *Robinson Crusoe*, to show definitely that his friend had made the mistake of thinking he had slept in a house for keeping ducks, when it really had the dignity of being a house for duck-shooting.

One day Stevenson gave me some letters to read which he had received from John MacGregor, who, he said, was the father of canoeing in this country. I now know that MacGregor was the son of General Sir Duncan MacGregor, and was born at Gravesend on January 24, 1825, and that a few weeks later he was the first to be handed out of the burning East Indiaman, the *Kent.* He was the author of a delightful book entitled *A Thousand Miles in the Rob Roy Canoe*, published in 1866, and of many other splendid books on his voyages; copies of these eventually came into my possession. He gave the proceeds of his books and lectures (some £10,000) to philanthropic institutions, and it was he who suggested the founding of the London Shoeblacks' Brigade. He died in 1892. As I became so very keen about canoeing, Stevenson recommended me to write to him, and allowed me to have his address. On my writing to the famous and genial Rob Roy, I got a most cordial response from him. He sent me the plans of his famous 'Rob Roy' canoe, and I meant at one time to build one, but that project never matured. I rather think at that time Mr MacGregor was President or held some official position in the Royal Lifeboat Institution; at all events, he wrote me on the stationery of some famous institution with which he was connected.

It was a beautiful Sunday afternoon when Stevenson took me to Inchmickery. Sunday must have been the only day available, because we had both been brought up very strictly to reverence the Sabbath day, and I have no doubt we justified the matter by putting it in as a work of necessity, as it was a necessity that the sea should be absolutely calm when we took such an adventurous voyage in a cockle-shell of a boat. Inchmickery is fully a mile from Cramond Island, and in one of the deepest channels of the Firth of Forth, which perhaps from the slim deck of a canoe looked even deeper than it really was. Stevenson talked about every subject under the sun, but I remember he specially enlarged on Sunday observance, for I told him that a few Sundays before I had been nearly drowned, early in the morning, off the north side of Cramond Island, and that the orthodox vision of his whole life, which the drowning man sees, had not been vouchsafed to me; that what disturbed me was that there would be a paragraph in the papers about a Sabbath-breaker having met his just punishment. Stevenson laughed heartily at my disappointment in not having the whole of my uneventful life flash before me (for I thought I was drowning), and at my positive objection to being made an awful warning to all Sunday-school scholars. I also told him how my cousin and I had got so tired of the Shorter Catechism on Sundays that one Sunday we hid it. But it was of no avail, because my mother knew by heart and in their order, not only the Answers but the Questions. His comment on this was:

'Boy, you have a mother!'

Inchmickery is not much more than a rock. At the time of our visit the grass, less than an acre in extent, would be about three or four feet long, but some years afterwards a healthy lot of rabbits were transferred to it from Cramond Island, and for two years, at all events, the place simply swarmed with rabbits and the grass got short enough. We explored the whole place and paddled right round it and the adjacent Oxcar Rock and the Cow and Calves Islands, which were shining in all their beauty, and returned pretty well tired, but thoroughly pleased with our adventure. With paddling so fiercely, and not being accustomed to the exercise, my hands were severely blistered, but as that was the only punishment I received for my Sabbath-breaking I considered I had got off very lightly.

So far as I can remember, all my meetings with Stevenson on Cramond Island took place in one summer, but it is quite possible that they may have extended over two or three years. I certainly, and the other happy inhabitants of the Island during the holiday months, looked persistently and longingly for the two cheery savages in their canoes. Stevenson's wonderful personal influence was felt by all of us. A magazine was published on the Island once a week, or as often as the editor could find contributions, which may have owed its existence to him; and certainly a paper on Lighthouses, written for a Literary Society, was practically due to his inspiration. Some odd copies of this magazine are still extant, but unfortunately not of this period. It was entitled *From out the Goblin's Cave*, and contained not only prose of peculiar spelling, but poetry and illustrations, plain and coloured.

My last interview with Stevenson, in Edinburgh, was somewhat curious and purely accidental, and happened many years after we had all left Cramond Island. I had to see a man on business in Charlotte Square, and was walking along George Street when I thought I saw my business acquaintance on the opposite side of the street. He, at the same time, caught sight of me, and we both walked towards each other and met in the middle of the street. He was wearing a velveteen coat, as the man I was going to visit certainly was in the habit of doing, but I saw at once that, although he was not the man I thought he was, he was an old-time friend.

'I really thought you were some one else,' I said to him. 'But I am delighted to find that you are one of the Cramond Island savages. How is Mr Balfour?'

Stevenson shook me warmly by the hand, and said that he was very pleased to meet me again, and added—

'I had no idea it was you. I also took you for some one else. Where is your man Friday? It seems it is neither of us, and yet we are both here,' and he laughed very heartily. He asked in the kindest manner for all those whom he had met on Cramond Island, and we had quite a long talk in the middle of the roadway. He did not seem in very good health, and I remember he said, somewhat wistfully:

'I have paddled a good long way since the Cramond Island days'; but he was not referring to his canoe.

I have read in the *Dictionary of National Biography* that Stevenson was only five feet ten in height, and that his eyes were dark hazel; but I am glad that to me he has always been, and always will be, over six feet in height and with black piercing eyes. It may have been only a passing glimpse I had of him, but it has remained with me. My only regret is that I never told him how I worshipped him for his early kindness to me. Stevenson was the big ship that passed me in the night as I sailed in the darkness in my cockleshell of a canoe.

LADY GUTHRIE.

Extract from a Letter.

. . . THE only time I ever saw Stevenson was at an 'At Home' at Professor Campbell Fraser's, 20 Chester Street. It must have been in early winter of 1876—or at the beginning of '77.

R. L. S. was seated on the end of a sofa—the arm, you could fancy, not meant for a seat! I gazed on him with much interest, but we were not introduced. He looked very unkempt in that well-dressed throng. He seemed of a dark complexion, and had untidy dark hair,—had a white tie, very untidy about the neck. My husband had told me of him often, of his uncommon abilities, but as far as I can remember he had at that time only begun to contribute to the *Cornhill*, and did not publish his first book till a good deal later. I was always sorry that we were not introduced, as to have shaken hands with him would be interesting now, but he seemed not to be a part of the circle round about him, and quite 'out of it'—that is my recollection.

In later years we got to know Mrs Stevenson, his mother, very well indeed, and missed her much when she died.

I never saw R. L. S.'s wife, tho' my husband dined at Heriot Row with her and Louis more than once. . . .

Recollections of R. L. S.

CAROLINE USHER.

THE last time I met R. L. S. at dinner he had a most unusual dinner dress—a black flannel shirt, velvet coat, gray trousers, and a blue tie. I can see him still, with his long, pale face and long hair brushed back and falling to his collar behind. My recollection of his conversation at that dinner is of continual argument of a most excited kind over a very trivial matter.

On one occasion, travelling from Leven with him, he argued for about half-an-hour on the colour of a sea-gull's feathers. We naturally called it gray, but he maintained it was a shade between black and white.

I remember one little characteristic incident, which illustrates the domestic side of Stevenson's character. When the company was assembling for a dinner-party, an extra couple arrived, having mistaken the night. Louis at once came to his mother's rescue and rearranged the table, sending next door to borrow forks and spoons, &c., as the household silver was exhausted.

As Seen in Passing.

MRS MILLER.

ONE day when walking along George Street, between Frederick Street and Castle Street, my attention was directed to a passer-by by a few boys shouting to him: ‘Hauf a laddie, hauf a lassie, hauf a yellow yite!’

The person at whom the boys shouted was a young man of delicate and somewhat gaunt build, with long black hair, and whose trousers, worn too short, showed a pair of white socks. To me his peculiar appearance left an impression on my mind which, even now, I recollect clearly.

On relating the incident to a friend I was told that the young man’s name was Robert Louis Stevenson.

As Seen in Passing.

CHARLOTTE JANE MACDONALD.

‘AS a ship which pasess in the night,’ so he passed. I never knew him even though I met him frequently in Princes Street—an outstanding figure among the crowd of everyday Princes Street pedestrians. Yet, school-girl as I then was, I used to wonder and speculate vaguely, almost with awe, on his remarkable appearance—sometimes being near enough to glimpse that indomitable smile always in his eyes. What puzzled me most was his curious way of walking. This he did sideways, and seemed never to be propelled by any power greater than the wind. He was from time to time wraith-like; then he floated along, tacking like a graceful yacht to protect its sails. He was usually dressed in fawn tweeds, his jacket being buttoned up over his chest, for the cruel Edinburgh winds. Another sight of him was as of the unsheathed soul of him being wafted along by some unseen power on his way. I felt as if were I to gaze too long at him he might vanish.

My only other impression of R. L. S. was of frequently seeing him slipping quietly into the old Edinburgh Music Hall on great concert nights. Then he looked less ethereal, in a black velvet coat. He was generally late, and slipped into his seat like a shadow. He must have been very fond of music, for I often saw him as I describe.

A BOOKMARK.

LADY IM THURN.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON attended my father's (Professor Lorimer's) class in Edinburgh University, which was compulsory for intending advocates. His family and ours, as it chanced, were not acquainted; but I recall his presence as a student at a musical party in our old house in Hill Street, and remember exchanging with him some of the amenities of hospitality. He was only known then as the son of Stevenson the engineer, but his personality impressed me so much that I knew him afterwards by sight. I can see him with the inward eye at one of the 'windy parallelograms' of Edinburgh streets—the corner of George Street near Paterson's music shop—can see his long, lean figure, his bright eyes, and the historic brown velveteen coat. Behind him Hanover Street sloped steeply down, and away beyond were the hills of Fife framing the Forth and 'the ships tacking for the Baltic.'

R. L. S. describes with a graphic pen a humiliating interview with Professor Fleeming Jenkin after a session of non-attendance at the engineering class: 'It is quite useless for you to come to me, Mr Stevenson. There may be doubtful cases; there is no doubt about yours. You have simply *not* attended my class.'

I hope the attendance at the Public Law class was better, and not that the professor was less scrupulous. At any rate the certificate which had to be produced, with others, by candidates at the Examination for the Bar must have been granted and then lost by the recipient. A little waif of a note, addressed to my father and placed by chance—probably as a momentary mark—in a book from which it fell out unexpectedly more than forty years later, lies before me now:

MONDAY.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have been waiting for the duplicate certificate you were so kind as to promise me, with much anxiety. Wednesday is the day of my sore trial. May I ask you to leave the Certificate out to-morrow? I shall call for it in the afternoon. Please forgive me for troubling you.

I remain, Yours sincerely,
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

The duplicate must have been obtained in time to aid him in his 'sore trial,' for, on 15th July 1875, he wrote Mrs Sitwell this characteristic note of triumph, dated from Parliament House:*

Madonna,
Passed.
Ever your
R.
L.
S.

---

* There is a facsimile in Lord Guthrie's *Robert Louis Stevenson.*—[ED.]

AN ORAL EXAMINATION.

JAMES F. MACKAY, C.B.E.

I remember many years ago, when a law student at Edinburgh University, meeting Robert Louis Stevenson. One evening I called on a friend, also a law student, at his rooms in Hamilton Place, Edinburgh, and while I was there R. L. S. came in to see my friend, and remained during the evening, and we all smoked and talked over many matters.

I think R. L. S. had that day passed his examination as advocate. At all events, he entertained us by a narrative of his experiences at that examination. The examination was a verbal one, and as one of the professors who examined Stevenson was well known to my friend and myself, Stevenson's account was very amusing. Apparently Stevenson had been told, or had somehow got to know, what questions this particular professor would ask, and he had carefully prepared his replies in the exact words of the text-books. The first question was 'What is Marriage?' Stevenson replied in the actual words laid down by Erskine—'The conjunction of man and woman in the strictest society of life till death shall separate them'—with the effect that his examiner was so surprised that it was a considerable time before another question was asked. When the second question came, it was 'What is Demurrage?' Again R. L. S. surprised his examiner by giving him the exact definition—'The allowance or compensation due to the master or owners of a ship, by the freighter, for the time the vessel may have been detained beyond the time specified or implied in the contract of affreightment or charter-party.' There was a third question; but I do not remember what it was. At all events the reply was also pat, with the result that the examiner was non-plussed and never spoke again. As my friend and I both knew the professor well, and were familiar with his peculiarities of manner, we thoroughly appreciated R. L. S.'s tale. It was a most amusing evening, as R. L. S. was in capital form.

I occasionally saw R. L. S. afterwards in the Parliament House, but did not again have an interview which was more than formal.

An Impression of R. L. S.

R. DOUIE URQUHART.

ALTHOUGH I had never the happy chance of speaking to Robert Louis Stevenson, I once heard him take part in a debate in the Speculative Society. It must have been in the session of 1875–76. The occasion was probably a special one, for R. L. S. had already become an Extraordinary Member in 1873. To me it was in my first session. I wish I were able to recall the subject of a discussion which had drawn R. L. S. to be present, for I have never forgotten the effect his speaking made upon my mind. Indeed that single appearance of his has proved the most indelible of many memories of the Meetings of the Speculative. How am I to account for this? It is true that here was the man who was one day to be acclaimed as our greatest writer since Sir Walter Scott; but his earliest book did not appear till two years later. My impression was therefore entirely derived from his own personality, and even at this long interval of years I can attribute it to the almost vibrating effect which the intense seer-like spirit of the speaker made upon myself. And the whole attitude and movements of his body answered to the intensity of his spirit. I even remember distinctly the strained nervousness of his outstretched fingers. 'In a state of nervous exaltation' is how Stevenson himself has described his feeling at his first speech in the Speculative (quoted in *History of the Speculative Society*, p. 38). I have also looked up the reference in *Weir of Hermiston* to his evidently so congenial 'Spec'; and transferring that portrayal of the young Hermiston scene in the identical hall to our present occasion, I think one can add just the finishing touch from Stevenson's own words to the memory I have been trying to recall. For it was under the 'shine of many wax tapers' and facing the 'glow of the great red fire' that Stevenson's arresting vivid countenance looked out on that contemporary group of youth.

THE LATE LORD DUNDAS.

(*A Letter.*)

DEAR MISS MASSON, . . . I fear I have little or nothing to say that could interest you or serve your purpose.

Coming here, after Oxford, to study law in 1876, and passing advocate in 1878, I was a bit (and 'bits' count in these young days) junior to R. L. S. I never really knew him. It was almost, though not quite, a case of *vide tantŭm!* Still, his striking appearance and personality made impressions on me which are still vivid after all these years. One could hardly forget his long pale face, fine brow, bright eye and lengthy hair, any more than his rather peculiar mode of dress,—dark flannel shirt with low-cut collar, velveteen coat, and loose red tie! I have seen his incongruous figure stalking up and down the floor of the Parliament House. But it was more at the 'Spec.', I think, that any exchange of speech took place between us, and that not often. I do not know if he even knew my name. Nor do I recollect anything particular he ever said to me. He puzzled me,—a certain seriousness, almost demureness of manner,—coupled with that bright and roving eye!

I have often wished since that I had been able to recognise,—though I in no way blame myself for failing to do so,—what a big man this was who had come among us. One might have learned a bit from him, and had a bit of enjoyment out of him. But one must take life as one finds it.

Yours sincerely,

DAVID DUNDAS.

EDINBURGH,
12 *Jan.* 1922.

STEVENSON AT SWANSTON.

MRS CATHCART.

MY father and mother—Professor and Mrs Tait—took me in a summer of the 'seventies to spend an afternoon at Swanston. Mrs Stevenson sent for us, the fourth member of the party was a Cambridge friend who was staying with us, and I was young enough to feel much hurt by his question whether a maid of Mrs Stevenson's who was seated beside the coachman was my nurse.

I remember we found a number of people at Swanston who nearly all seemed very old to me, and I thought it was going to be a very dull afternoon. To my great relief a tall young man took me for a walk into the hills. It was R. L. S., then perhaps about twenty-five years old. He asked me what books I liked to read, and I said Kingsley's *Heroes* and a Classical Dictionary, and then he asked me what was the nicest book I had ever read, and I at once replied *Robinson Crusoe.* The answer must have pleased him, for I distinctly remember he held out his hand to me, and we continued our walk hand in hand and talked about the book.

He made the threatened dull afternoon a very happy one for me, and when we went home he gave me a snake as a parting gift.

About R. L. S.'s snake, my mother's recollection differs from mine; she thinks it was made of postage stamps, and survived even my childish handling for years. I think he gave me a snake that blew out, and that I continued blowing it out all evening until it burst, for I remember howling myself to sleep after this memorable expedition to Swanston, I was so sorry about my snake.

R. L. S. as Richard II.

J. M. HARKOM

(President of the Edinburgh Shakespeare Society).

ON two memorable occasions the play of *Richard II.* was read by the old Shakespeare Union, of which R. L. S. was a member. To the reading (in a room at 8 St Andrew Square) two evenings were devoted, the 22nd and 29th of February 1876. On both occasions Stevenson read the part of the King. His appearance was striking and picturesque. A slim youth, rather above the middle height, with hair always long and lank and *then* of a pale brown colour; wearing a velvet coat, and over it a long cloak of old-fashioned cut, with brass clasps. The head-piece he wore was of the smoking-cap order and embroidered—such as a German student might wear in his club.

What helped to impress those two evenings on the memory was the remarkable likeness of the future novelist—as he then stood and spoke—to the ancient fresco portrait of Richard II. in Westminster Abbey—in safe concealment during the late War, but now restored to its old place on the south of the chancel. His whole expression while reading the play was remarkably suggestive of the original.

Memories.

LOUISA B. MACKENZIE.

MY mother was at a dinner-party at the Stevensons' one evening. Cummy had put Louis to bed, and after he was asleep crept downstairs to the pantry to help there. Unfortunately Louis awoke, and finding himself alone, he must have got up and come downstairs and sat on a step at the drawing-room door. And the little child would feel less lonely, looking over the staircase to see the servants coming out and in of the dining-room, and listening to the voices of the guests. My mother, on coming upstairs after dinner, found the little white-robed figure sitting there. She was quickly followed by Mrs Stevenson, full of anxiety lest the delicate child would have caught a chill.

I remember staying with Mr and Mrs Stevenson and Louis in the winters of, I think, 1875 and 1876. The latter date I am quite sure about, for Louis, writing his name in my birthday text-book, added the date 1876, and I asked him to change this, as I wished the date of his birth after his name, and not the date when he wrote it in my book. He did so, scoring out 1876, and changing it to 1850.

Louis was at home on both occasions when my sister and I visited Mr and Mrs Stevenson in 17 Heriot Row. I look back on those visits with the very greatest pleasure. Mr and Mrs Stevenson were both charming—he so clever and amusing, and she so full of life and kindliness—and they made a perfect host and hostess. They used to give little dinner-parties for us young people, and I remember thoroughly enjoying them, and all the brightness and fun that went on—Louis entering into it all.

Mr Stevenson had a great affection for two little Skye terriers which he possessed at that time. Coolin was the name of one of them, but I have forgotten the name of the other—and it used to interest me much to watch Mr Stevenson with those dogs. He spoke to them as if they were human beings, and indeed they looked up at him and listened as if they thoroughly understood all he was saying. One evening especially I remember. We had finished dinner, Louis was present too, and the two dogs were sitting beside Mr Stevenson's chair. He suddenly turned to them and began a long talk with them, they looking up at him through the shaggy hair falling over their eyes, and as if they were taking all in that was being said. Mr Stevenson then turned round to us at table and said: 'You think those dogs will not be in Heaven! I tell you they will be there long before any of us.' After that we rose and adjourned to the drawing-room, accompanied by Louis, who did not see how he could argue the point.

I remember another evening when Mrs Stevenson, Louis, and I were in the drawing-room. I was sitting on the sofa beside Mrs Stevenson, when Louis rose and began to walk, with his long, swinging stride, up and down the room. He gave us a long dissertation on a little child belonging to a Russian princess whom he had met abroad. He showed me the child's photograph, and then began the subject. Mrs Stevenson took my hand in hers and whispered: 'Now we shall listen,'—which we had to do for quite an hour! His mother simply hung on his every word. She saw the genius waking in him then, and always believed and hoped great things for him. But to us young people Louis seemed rather eccentric and erratic in those days, and I must confess that at the end of his long dissertation I felt a little bit tired, not to say bored.

Another evening, when my sister was out at one of the Edinburgh balls, I was alone with the family. Louis, perhaps thinking I, not at the ball, might be feeling dull, asked me to go up to his study with him, and he read to me something he was then writing, and began to criticise it as he read. I remember one of his remarks was: 'Now, I think that bit rather fine,'—to which I meekly agreed!

I remember yet another evening, when Mr Stevenson and Louis had a great religious discussion. We always went down to the dining-room for Prayers in the evening. Mrs Stevenson read one of the Psalms on this occasion, and something in the Psalm—I can't remember what—struck Louis, and when Prayers were over he began an argument about it. Mr Stevenson took it up, and Mrs Stevenson whispered to me, 'Let us be quiet and listen.' They discussed the subject for some time, neither of them getting too hot over it, but threshing it out calmly. At the end I remember I was all on Mr Stevenson's side of the argument.

When my sister Nellie was married, Louis sent her a handsome silver hand-mirror, and wrote an appropriate verse about its reflecting her bonnie face. My niece May has that mirror now.

I was with Mrs Stevenson at the large gathering in the Music Hall in Edinburgh which met to discuss the Memorial to Louis. I lunched before the meeting with Mrs Stevenson at 8 Randolph Cliff. There were present Sir Sidney Colvin, Sir James Barrie, and other admirers of Louis. The conversation after lunch was very interesting, and *time* was forgotten. At last some one remarked, 'Look at the hour; it is a quarter to three!' As the meeting began at three, there was a general rush to get ready and start off. When we arrived at the Music Hall the stairs up to the Hall were packed, and it looked hopeless for us to attempt to get through. One of the gentlemen with Mrs Stevenson said to some of the people—'This is R. L. S.'s Mother, she must pass.' A man in the crowd then shouted out—'Make room for the Mother of R. L. S.!' In a marvellous way a passage was made, and we got up the stairs. We were stopped again at the door of the Hall, and the passages inside seemed packed; but again the message was passed on: 'Make room for the Mother of R. L. S.!' Finally we found ourselves in front of the platform, and Mrs Stevenson and I were helped up somehow, and put on the front seats. A man sitting next to me said, 'Excuse me, but may I ask who you ladies are?'—all on the platform were men—and I replied, 'The lady on my other side is Louis Stevenson's Mother.' He became greatly excited on hearing this, and exclaimed 'To think I am sitting only two seats away from the Mother of Stevenson!' He did not seem to be able to get over such an honour!

Mrs Stevenson was indeed a proud mother that day. Lord Rosebery, in the middle of his speech about Louis, turned to her and bowed, saying 'We have his Mother in our midst to-day.' She sat there very calm, but the expression on her face showed how she was feeling it—the great honour shown to her son.

She always called me her 'daughter,' laughingly saying to my mother that she must spare me to her; and I often used to go about with her, when she wished a companion.

Mrs Stevenson died of pneumonia at 8 Randolph Cliff, where she had lived latterly with her sister, Miss Whyte Balfour. It was from this sister we got particulars of Mrs Stevenson's death. Just before she died, she looked up suddenly and exclaimed 'Louis!' Then, turning to the others about her, she said 'I must go,' and fell back and was gone. So she went forth to meet Louis, never again to be parted.

A Back Office in South Charlotte Street.

W. GRANT-LUMSDEN WINCHESTER.

YOU ask me for my recollections of Robert Louis Stevenson. I am afraid they are indefinite and sketchy. But I knew him well. When I was a boy my father was an elder in St Stephen's Church, where the Stevensons worshipped. Thomas Stevenson's massive intellectual face comes before me as I write.

It was in No. 11 South Charlotte Street, Messrs. Mitchell and Baxter's office, that I chiefly saw R. L. S. I was apprenticed to Charles Baxter, whom Stevenson constantly visited. When Mr Baxter was engaged, Stevenson was put into a back room where I sat; and many a chat we had. Alas! I had not the prescience to know that I was talking to one of the greatest literary geniuses of all time, or else I would have 'taken notes.' What I chiefly recollect was the bizarre, Bohemian figure,—the lanky hair, the velveteen coat, and the unconventional (for staid Edinburgh) hat. A wonderful brown flannel shirt and scarlet tie impressed my boyish fancy. But above all I remember his gracious kindly manner, and his exquisite courtesy. He talked to me, an apprentice on a three-legged stool, as if I had been the most eminent W.S. in Edinburgh. Alas! the purport of those conversations, probably entirely ephemeral, has quite passed from my memory; but what remains is the recollection of that charming personality.

There were rumours in the office that R. L. S. was doing fine literary work, and I think the first of his volumes I bought (and I have it still) was *Virginibus Puerisque.*

South Charlotte Street was then a rendezvous for several men well known in literary circles. Sir Walter Simpson, James Walter Ferrier, and W. E. Henley, among others, visited Charles Baxter.

Stevenson joined the Speculative before I did, and I don't think I met him there. It was these chats in the little room in South Charlotte Street I like to remember, and on looking back on them I think that here indeed was a veritable 'Prince Charming,' who was one day to charm the whole world, as he charmed those who met him in those far-away days in picturesque Edinburgh.

GREZ.

LLOYD OSBOURNE.

From the Introduction to the Vailima Edition.

. . . WE went to Grez, which was even more attractive than it had been described to us. . . . It was so early in the season that we had the inn all to ourselves, though always in our minds was a vision of those dreadful Stevensons returning to drive us forth. . . .

Then somehow—I forget the intervening details—we were again at Grez, with the weather becoming warmer every day and the dreadful Stevensons more imminent. Some of the artists had already arrived, amiable young fellows who painted in the fields under prodigious white umbrellas, and who seemed to find nothing especially affronting in the presence of my very pretty mother and very pretty sister.

At last, and the scene is as clear to me as though it had happened yesterday, I can recall my mother and myself gazing down from our bedroom window at Isobel, who was speaking in the court below to the first of the arriving Stevensons—'Bob' Stevenson as he was always called—a dark, roughly dressed man as lithe and graceful as a Mexican *vaquero* and evoking something of the same misgiving. He smiled pleasantly, hat in hand, with a mocking expression that I learned afterwards was habitual with him, and which reminded me of the wolf in *Little Red Riding Hood*. . . . With 'Bob' on our side—and he soon became very much of a friend—all our trepidations subsided, and a curious reversal took place in our attitude towards that other Stevenson, that unknown 'Louis' as every one called him.

Louis, it seemed, was everybody's hero; Louis was the most wonderful and inspiring of men; his wit, his sayings, his whole piquant attitude towards life were unending subjects of conversation. Everybody said: 'Wait till Louis gets here,' with an eager and expectant air.

All my previous fear of him had disappeared, and in its place was a sort of worshipping awe. He had become my hero, too, this wonderful Louis Stevenson, who was so picturesquely gliding towards Grez in a little sailing canoe, and who camped out every night in a tent. . . .

Then in the dusk of a summer's day as we all sat at dinner about the long *table d'hôte*, some sixteen or eighteen people, of whom my mother and sister were the only women and I the only child, there was a startling sound at one of the open windows giving on the street, and in vaulted a young man with a dusty knapsack on his back. The whole company rose in an uproar of delight, mobbing the newcomer with outstretched hands and cries of greeting. He was borne to a chair; was made to sit down in state, and still laughing and talking in the general hubbub was introduced to my mother and sister.

'My cousin, Mr Stevenson,' said Bob, and there ensued a grave inclination of heads, while I wriggled on my chair very much overcome and shyly stole peeps at the stranger. He was tall, straight, and well-formed, with a fine ruddy complexion, clustering light-brown hair, a small tawny moustache and extraordinarily brilliant brown eyes. But these details convey nothing of the peculiar sense of power that seemed to radiate from him—of a peculiar intensity of character that while not exactly dominating had in its quality something infinitely more subtle and winning; and he was besides so gay, so sparkling, so easily the master in all exchange of talk and raillery that I gazed at him in spell-bound admiration.

How incredible it would have seemed to me then had some prophetic voice told me this stranger's life and mine were to run together for nineteen years to come; that I was destined to become his step-son, his comrade, the sharer of all his wanderings; that we were to write books together; that we were to sail far-off seas; that we were to hew a home out of the tropic wilderness; and that at the end, while the whole world mourned, I was to lay his body at rest on a mountain peak in Oceana.

With Stevenson at Grez.

BIRGE HARRISON.

From The Century Magazine, *December* 1916.

It was a memorable day for Stevenson when the *Cigarette* and the *Arethusa* moored at the foot of the narrow little garden which leads from the shores of the Loing up to the old Pension Chevillon at Grez. Could he have foreseen that the apparently simple act of tying his canoe-rope to the landing-post that morning was to make of him a world wanderer, that it would cut him off definitely from his beloved Scotland and all that Scotland meant to him, that it would lead him as an 'Amateur Immigrant' to California, that it would start him on that year-long cruise of the Pacific, and waft him at last, like a piece of driftwood, to far-off Samoa—could he have foreseen all this, would he, I wonder, have set foot ashore that warm summer morning, or, turning his prow once more to the current, have paddled on down-stream to Paris and the sea? Truly I believe that he would have landed only the more joyously, for Stevenson was nothing if not a true sport. Despite a frail physique, he sought adventure eagerly and always stood ready to meet it more than half-way. Nothing ever daunted him, and nothing so roused him to anger as any suggestion that his own health should weigh in the balance when there was question of adventure by flood or by field. As a matter of fact, and as time proved, he possessed an astonishing reserve of nervous energy, and in certain cases where other stronger men went to pieces, his high spirits seemed to serve him adequately in lieu of physical strength.

But he well knew, and has himself said, that *the* great adventure is not that which we go forth to seek in far places, but that which comes to seek us by the fireside. And this was more than half true in his own case, for it was not upon any business of his own that he came to Grez, but rather because our fellow-art-student and comrade Willie Simpson was a brother to Sir Walter Simpson, who was the 'Cigarette' of Stevenson's *An Inland Voyage*, and his present companion.

It was a gay, picturesque, and genuinely Bohemian community in which he found himself at Grez, and it has seemed to me that it might be well worth while to describe it in some detail, in view of the fact that it was destined to form the background of Stevenson's life for many months to come.

The nucleus of the colony was Anglo-Saxon, and the majority of its members were either English or Americans; but there was a sufficient sprinkling of French and Scandinavians to give a cosmopolitan quality to the gathering, and an occasional Spaniard or Italian added a touch of southern colour. All of its members were either artists, artists' models in *villégiature*, or students of art in painting and sculpture, or in music, literature, or the drama.

The one who always stands out most vividly in my own mind and memory is my beloved chum and studio-companion Theodore Robinson, who is now taking his place beside Inness, Wyant, and Winslow Homer as one of our American old masters. Robinson, like Stevenson, was a semi-invalid, a great sufferer from asthma, which never gave him a moment's respite; but, like Stevenson again, he never allowed his weakness to interfere with the main business of life or to intrude itself upon others.

Robinson was far from handsome in the classic sense. An enormous head, with goggle eyes and a whopper jaw, was balanced on a frail body by means of a neck of extreme tenuity; and stooping shoulders with a long slouching gait did not add anything of grace or of beauty to his general appearance. But when one of the French comrades threw an arm about his shoulders, and casting a sideways and puzzled glance upon him remarked, '*Tu es vilain, Robinson, mais je t'aime*,' we all understood, for out of those goggle eyes shone the courage of a Bayard, and in their depths brooded the soul of a poet and dreamer, while his whole person radiated a delightful and ineffable sense of humour. Stevenson and he at once became bosom friends and companions, for they were hewn out of the same block.

I shall not forget Stevenson's joy at the manner in which Robinson once put an end to a rather tiresome rainy-day discussion on the subject of genealogy, during which we had been treated to more or less colorful accounts of the distinguished lineage of most of those present.

Robinson had remained silent throughout the discussion, with only an occasional subterranean chuckle to indicate that he was listening to the conversation. Finally some one called out: 'Bobbie, we have not yet heard from you. Who were your noble ancestors, anyway?'

With a subdued twinkle he replied: 'Well, if you really wish to know, I will tell you. My father was a farmer, and my grandparents were both very respectable and deserving domestic servants. I have never carried my investigation any further up the family tree.'

There was a short, somewhat embarrassed silence, and then Stevenson threw his arms about Robinson's shoulders with a shout of joy. '*Tu es vilain, Robinson*,' he cried; '*mais je t'aime*.'

It has always been a source of regret to me that no one of us painter-men ever thought of making a double portrait of the pair in that pose, for, if successful, it would have been a psychological document of surpassing interest. It would have been a failure indeed did it not demonstrate the profound fact that mere physical ugliness is no bar to the expression of spiritual beauty in the human countenance; for the almost Gothic mask of Robinson's features could and did radiate sweetness and light as readily as did the nearly classic beauty of Stevenson's own profile.

Another member of our little colony who has left an indelible mark on my memory is Robert Mowbray Stevenson, Louis's cousin, the 'Bob' of the 'Vailima Letters,' who came down from Paris shortly after Stevenson's own arrival. Years later, as professor of art at Oxford and as the author of a remarkable monograph upon Velasquez, he was destined to become widely known throughout the world. At that time, however, he was endeavouring to demonstrate to himself and to others his right to be ranked seriously as a landscape painter, and wasting considerable quantities of perfectly good pigment in the effort, which before many months he was frankly to abandon as a mistake. But although his talent did not lie in the direction of pictorial expression, Bob Stevenson was, more nearly than any other mortal I have ever met, a genius in the true sense of the word; unfortunately for himself, however, and still more unfortunately for the world at large, his genius could expand only under conditions which precluded its finding permanent expression. Just as those of us who have heard Edwin Booth play *Hamlet* know that there never was nor ever could be such another *Hamlet*, so those of us who have heard Bob Stevenson converse know that, in this generation at least, there never has been or could be such another talker. But for its fullest and best expression, his special talent demanded an interlocutor, or at least the figment of an opponent in the scintillating monologue which he was pleased to style a discussion. If it comes to a mere question of genius pure and simple, no one who knew the two cousins intimately would have hesitated for an instant to award the primacy to Bob, and Louis himself would have been the first to concur in the justice of this decision. When the after-dinner coffee was on the table in the old *salle-à-manger*, it was Louis's custom to stir up a discussion upon some subject connected with ethics or morals or the general conduct of life, and then, if he succeeded in getting Bob started, to sit back and enjoy the intellectual feast which was sure to follow, just dropping in a word of dissent now and then in order to keep the stream flowing.

On these occasions Bob's flights of imagination were not only brilliant to a degree, but they were often humorous and most entertaining. Not infrequently they took the form of a story, with a complicated plot evolved on the spur of the moment, and with characters who by their acts and words gave living form to the abstraction which he had set out to ride to earth. Louis, being the artist that he was, made notes, and several of the stories which later appeared in the *New Arabian Nights* and are there duly accredited to 'my cousin Robert Mowbray Stevenson,' were thrown off by the latter during one of these impromptu symposia. First among these was the famous 'Suicide Club,' to which, however, Stevenson himself added what was perhaps the most original and telling touch—the incident of the young man with the cream tarts. The gruesome idea of the main story grew out of an indignant protest on the part of Bob to an opinion set forth by his cousin to the effect that in the domain of morals men were in no sense free agents, and that no man had the right to dispose of his own life any more than he had the right to dispose of the life of his friend or neighbour. Bob, in reply, quoted the verse from *Omar:*

> 'What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence?*
> And without asking, *Whither* hurried hence!
> Ah, contrite Heaven endowed us with the Vine
> To drug the memory of that insolence!'

contending hotly that, inasmuch as we had not been consulted when we were thus rudely and without our own consent dumped into life, the option was surely ours as to the time and manner of leaving it.

Then followed the inevitable monologue, which gradually developed into the plot of the 'Suicide Club' as printed in the *New Arabian Nights*, and in which Bob set forth his own ideas as to the most agreeable mode of shuffling off this mortal coil. But, not quite content with his first effort, he proceeded to evolve an alternate plot, which, while not so dramatic as the original, was at least not quite so distressing. In this second story the device of the executioner who is selected by chance, is replaced by a train which is scheduled to start once a month at midnight from Charing Cross, and is to carry all those who during the month have decided that life has no further attractions for them. The train is to be the last word in modern luxury, with a dancing-car for those who would dance, and a dining-car for those who would dine, furnished with the most dainty and delectable dishes, and provided with champagne and fine liqueurs of the most expensive brands. The track is to be cleared and the train started, without an engineer or a train crew, direct for the cliff of Dover, over which it is supposed to plunge at a moment unknown to any of the passengers, and when the revelry is at its height.

The mutual admiration of the two Stevensons was a delight to see, and that it was destined to be a lifelong affection is shown by the long series of 'Vailima Letters' addressed to Bob. Fundamentally, of course, their mutual attraction for each other was due to the fact that both were true *men;* but it was doubtless partly attributable to the added fact that the quality of their genius was as different as was their outward appearance. Louis, as we all know, was of the blond, appealing Northern type, but Bob was as black and as fiery as an Andalusian. . . .

At this time Stevenson was publishing a series of studies of men and things in the *Cornhill Magazine*, and he was also engaged upon *An Inland Voyage* and parts of the *New Arabian Nights*. As if this were not sufficient to satisfy the cravings of the greediest of workers, he was also writing various stories and essays which he called 'Studies,' but which he afterwards destroyed.

I have a vivid recollection of a most interesting shop-talk with him about this time, which occurred during a long walk to Fontainebleau. As we tramped along under the shade of the tall poplars, he outlined to me the writer's *credo* as he knew it, and explained his own methods of work.

'You painter-chaps make lots of studies, don't you?' he exclaimed. 'And you don't frame them all and send them to the Salon, do you? You just stick them up on the studio wall for a bit, and presently you tear them up and make more. And you copy Velasquez and Rembrandt and Vandyke and Corot; and from each you learn some little trick of the brush, some obscure little point in technic. And you know damn well that it is the knowledge thus acquired that will enable you later on to deliver your own message with a fine and confident bravado. You are simply learning your *métier;* and believe me, *mon cher*, an artist in any line without the *métier* is just a blind man with a stick. Now, in the literary line I am simply doing what you painter-men are doing in the pictorial line—learning the *métier*.'

'Yes, but how do you work the game?' I enquired. 'We artists use paint and canvas and brushes precisely as the masters did.'

'Well, I use pen and ink and paper precisely as did the masters of the pen,' laughed Stevenson, 'only a pencil is quite good enough for me at present. Just now I am making a story *à la* Balzac, with a French plot, French local colour, and every little touch and detail as close to the old boy as I can possibly make it. And *isn't* he a wizard! Look at *Cousine Bette* and *Peau de Chagrin* and the *Médecin de Campagne.* Aren't they just marvels of literary perfection! Really, I believe that Balzac held up to nature a more wonderful mirror than even the great W. S. himself. And dear old *Père Goriot,* don't you just *know* him better even than if you had met him right here on the *grande route* and had an hour's chat with him? I like to swallow a great master whole, as it were; to read at one go everything he's written, and then have a try myself at something in his manner. The only way to become a master is to study the masters—take my word for it. It's all one whether it's in paint or clay or words. And then, if you are humble enough and keep an open mind *and* have something of your own to say, you may one of these long days learn how to say it. I have at various periods thus sat at the feet of Sir Walter Scott and Smollett and Fielding and Dickens and Poe and Baudelaire, and the number of things which I have written in the style of each would fill a clothes-basket.'

I have since occasionally regretted that some of the contents of this basket had not been rescued and given to us in a discreet little *sub-rosa* book, if only for an example to future students of art and of literature. Yet the master probably knew best, and pursued the wise course in destroying his tentative experiments. . . .

Among the regular members of our artist band I remember Henley, a brother of the poet; Metcalf; Joe Heseltine; Enfield; Weldon Hawkins; and Walter Ullman—all English; Frank O'Meara, the handsome, *debonair* young Irishman who was to die before his great talent as a painter made its mark; Carl Larson and Shredswig, both now famous abroad as well as in their native Sweden; Will Low; Benz; Walter Palmer; and Jameson, a young Scottish painter of talent, and a brother of Dr Jameson of Kimberley, South Africa, who, as the author of the Jameson Raid, caused some little trouble in South Africa later on. This reminds me that one day the young doctor turned up at the Pension Chevillon with the statement that, with the help and advice of a certain Cecil Rhodes, who was a chum of his down there, he had cleaned up the sum of two thousand pounds sterling, which sum he had brought back with him to defray the expenses of a Continental trip, he having neglected to do the grand tour before going to South Africa. He kindly invited the whole colony to join him as guests in the proposed round of Europe, promising that everything should be first-class, and that no wine more plebeian than champagne should be served on the trip. Accordingly, after a symposium which lasted from daylight to daylight, a gay band of a dozen young and brave men started off upon this first Jameson Raid, which has hitherto been unchronicled and unknown to fame. Stevenson was not of the party, he having at the time other interests in Grez which were of a more absorbing nature, and of which more anon. Perhaps it was just as well on the whole that he remained behind, for something under a month later a hollow-eyed, worn, bedraggled band limped into Grez, explaining that their condition was due to the fact that they had ended up the tour three days previously by climbing Mont Blanc!

One of the most picturesque and at the same time one of the most mysterious members of our group was a young Frenchman named Salis, who threw himself upon our mercy by explaining that he was an escaped convict, and that he did not dare to return to his old haunts in Paris or even venture to live among French people elsewhere, knowing full well that he would be apprehended and sent back hot-foot to New

Caledonia. He had been a *communard*, it appeared, in fact the editor of a *communard* journal in Paris, whence he had been deported for advocating too strenuously the cause '*Liberté, égalité, fraternité.*' He was certainly an entertaining chap, and Stevenson, ever on the alert for the picturesque in human form, became his principal friend and companion among the Anglo-Saxon group. Shortly after his arrival the law of general amnesty was passed, and Salis was once more free to return to his beloved Paris. But, alas! he had nothing to return to. Communism was no longer a profession that paid a living wage, and to return to Paris without a profession meant certain starvation. So Stevenson called a special meeting of the colony to consider the '*Question Salis*', and to devise ways and means by which the owner of the name could live and thrive reasonably once more in Paris. He elected himself chairman of the meeting, and in the opening address stated that there was only one sure and never-failing method by which one could always and anywhere be certain of making money, and that was by the sale of drink. In England, where drink is dispensed at the 'pub,' it was not a particularly cleanly or attractive profession, to be sure; but in Paris it was different, he said. For what could be neater or more appealing than the little white marble tables outside a boulevard café, with the prim little hedge of arbor vitæ dividing off its special strip of sidewalk from the area pertaining to the adjoining shop? Moreover, a café could be of any desired character—musical, artistic, or literary. The Café Salis should be all three of these in one. Right here we had the painters who would cover the walls with their pictures, the poets who would recite their own poetry of evenings, and the musicians who would be only too pleased to discourse sweet sound for the price of a *bock* or a *fine* that was not charged up. The bourgeois would repay, what? But the Café Salis needed a name. Neither a book nor a picture was quite sure of success without a taking title, and this was still more true of a café.

Just at this time it happened that Hawkins, one of our group, had sent to the Salon a picture which had achieved a considerable success despite the fact that its subject was most lugubrious—nothing less than a forlorn orphan weeping at the grave of her mother. One day as Hawkins was working on his nearly completed canvas in the village cemetery it chanced that a black cat went slinking along the stone wall in the background, arching its back and resting occasionally to survey the landscape. Suddenly it occurred to the artist that this little bit of life in the canvas might *egayer* his picture a bit, while the sable colour of the creature would keep it fairly within the scheme.

'How about Hawkins's black cat?' cried one of the committee. 'Stamped out of black iron it would make a bully sign to swing over the door.'

The suggestion was carried by acclamation, and the 'Café of the Black Cat,' which was opened in the *Quartier des Batignolles* that autumn, had an immediate and bewildering success; so much so indeed that presently its proprietor, grown prosperous and sleek, the *communard* utterly submerged in the successful bourgeois, was swept into the French Senate on the tide of his prosperity. Before leaving Grez, Salis rowed up to the house of a murderous miller, a sinister person who was known positively to have killed his old mother in cold blood, although the crime could never be fastened upon him, and calling him to the door of his mill, recited in stentorian tones and with much dramatic gesticulation Victor Hugo's 'Assassin.' Taken all in all, a picturesque person was Rudolfe Salis.

This little incident was very characteristic of Stevenson, and it illustrates what always seemed to me the most salient and dominating force in his nature—an intense interest in the human drama which was being enacted about him, the artist's ability to see it as a drama, and an uncontrollable desire to mix in the fray himself and, playing the part of a kindly *deus ex machina*, to bring the fifth act of the play to a happy or an artistic conclusion.

I do not think that in those early days he appeared to any of us as specifically a genius, an exceptional man set apart for great accomplishments. Indeed, had we been solemnly assured that he would share the honour, with only one or two possible competitors, of being the foremost English writer of the latter half of the nineteenth century, we would certainly have received the assurance with a smile. What! Louis? so simple, kindly, natural; so all-round a good fellow; so like all the rest of us, only nicer!

And I am quite sure that in his inmost heart at this period he could never really have looked forward to nor expected the fame which later came to him, and which grows and expands as time gives us the perspective wherewith to view it in all its roundness and bigness and essential simplicity. In fact, in introducing himself to me, he remarked simply that he was a 'writer-chap,' or *hoped* to be one.

I was told of another rainy afternoon 'blague party', at which I did not chance to be present, during which Bob Stevenson amused himself by forecasting the future careers of those present. When he came to his cousin he remarked with a satirical little smile: 'There sits Louis, as smug and complacent as any old *type de bourgeois*. I have not the least doubt that he fondly imagines that one of these days they will be publishing all of his dinky, private correspondence—"the Letters of R. L. S."—in boards.' And Louis joined as heartily as any one in the laugh which the sally raised. Bob, at least, did live to see the publication of the 'Vailima Letters', and I have often wondered if he remembered this little incident as he thumbed their leaves. . . .

A RECOLLECTION.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY, F.B.A., LL.D.

THE following report of how I first met Louis Stevenson is short, but may possibly in form be not unsweet. I was introduced to him at the Savile Club, I am not quite sure by whom, but it was almost certainly by Andrew Lang. Before I could say anything he said 'I'm told you think what I write is rot.' I replied 'No: I think *some* of what you write is rot. Will you come and dine with me to-night?' Which reply, after forty years and more, I regard as in both parts not unworthy of an Englishman. So he came: and we were friends ever after. I had a pretty good notion as to who was likely to have been his teller, and probably some of the other contributors to this book may share it.

A GIFT COPY FROM R. L. S.

MRS ADAM BLACK.

THO' I can remember Robert Louis Stevenson very well, I feel that what I give here is worth much more than any recollections of mine, and it would be very difficult for me to express my recollections in writing. What I send for the volume is what he wrote in the copy of *Travels with a Donkey* which he gave to Miss Balfour ('Auntie'), which she left to me, her niece.

'My dear Auntie, If you could only think a little less of me and others, and a great deal more of your delightful self, you would be as nearly perfect as there is any need to be. I think I have travelled with donkeys all my life; and the experience of this book should have been nothing new to me. But if ever I knew a real donkey, I believe it is yourself. You are so eager to think well of everybody else (except when you are angry on account of some third person) that I do not believe you have ever left yourself time to think properly of yourself. You never understand when other people are unworthy, nor when you yourself are worthy in the highest degree. Oblige us all by having a guid conceit o' yoursel, and despising in the future the whole crowd including your affectionate nephew

R. L. S.'

Stevenson in California.

MRS VAN DE GRIFT SANCHEZ.

From Life of Mrs R. L. Stevenson.

IN the year 1879 there remained one spot in practical America where the Spirit of Romance still lingered, though even there she stood a-tiptoe, ready to take wing into the mists of the Pacific. It seems fitting that it should have been at that place that I first knew Robert Louis Stevenson. Although the passing of the years has dimmed the memory of those days to a certain degree, yet here and there a high light gleams out in the shadowy haze of the picture and brings back the impression of his face and personality and of the surroundings and little events of our daily life in his company as though they had happened but yesterday. The little town of Monterey, being out of the beaten track of travel, and having no mines or large agricultural tracts in its vicinity to stimulate trade, had dreamed away the years since American occupation, and still retained much of the flavour of the pastoral days of Spanish California. . . .

High adobe walls, topped with tiles, concealed pleasant secluded gardens, from which the heavy perfume of the floribundia and other semi-tropical flowers poured out on the evening air. Behind such a wall and in the midst of such a garden stood the two-storey adobe dwelling of the Señorita Maria Ygnacia Bonifacio, known to her intimates as Doña Nachita. In the 'clean empty rooms' of this house, furnished with Spanish abstemiousness and kept in shining whiteness, 'where the roar of the water dwelt as in a shell upon the chimney,' we had our temporary residence, and here Louis Stevenson came often to visit us and share our simple meals, each of which became a little fête in the thrill of his presence and conversation. Something he had in him that made life seem a more exciting thing, better worth living, to every one associated with him, and it seemed impossible to be dull or bored in his company. . . .

In the Señorita Bonifacio's garden, where we spent much of our time, there was a riot of flowers—rich yellow masses of enormous cloth-of-gold roses, delicate pink old-fashioned Castilian roses, which the Señorita carefully gathered each year to make rose-pillows, besides fuchsias as large as young trees, and a thousand other blooms of incredible size and beauty. . . . As to flowers, it seemed to me that they made no particular appeal to Mr Stevenson except for their scent, in which he was very like the rest of his sex the world over. He cared rather for nature's larger effects—a noble cloud in the sky, the thunder of the surf on the beach, or the fresh resinous smell of the pine forest.

To this house he came often of an afternoon to read the results of his morning's work to the assembled family. While we sat in a circle, listening in appreciative silence, he nervously paced the room, reading aloud in his full, sonorous voice—a voice that always seemed remarkable in so frail a man—his face flushed and his manner embarrassed, for, far from being over-confident about his work, he always seemed to feel a sort of shy anxiety lest it should not be up to the mark. He invariably gave respectful attention and careful consideration to the criticism of the humblest of his hearers, but in the end clung with Scottish pertinacity to his own opinion if he was sure of its justice. In this way we heard *The Pavilion on the Links*, which he wrote at Monterey, and read to us chapter by chapter as they came from his pen. . . .

Out of the mist arise memories of walks along the beach—the long beach of clean white sand that stretches unbroken for many miles around the great sweeping curve of Monterey Bay, where we 'watched the tiny sandy-pipers, and the huge Pacific seas.' Sometimes we walked there at night, when the blood-red harvest-moon sprang suddenly like a great ball of fire above the rim of horizon on the opposite side of the circling bay, sending a glittering track across the water to our very feet. To walk with Stevenson on such a night, and watch 'the waves come in slowly, vast and green, curve their translucent necks and burst with a surprising uproar'—to walk with him on such a night and listen to his inimitable talk is the sort of memory that cannot fade. On other nights when the waters of the bay were all alight with the glow of phosphorescence, we walked on the old wooden pier and marvelled at the billows of fire sent rolling in beneath us by the splashing porpoises. . . .

The setting of the picture is now changed to Oakland, across the bay from San Francisco, where we lived for some months in the little house which Mr Stevenson himself describes in the dedication to *Prince Otto*, as 'far gone in the respectable stages of antiquity, and which seemed indissoluble from the green garden in which it stood, and that yet was a sea-traveller in its younger days, and had come round the Horn piece-meal in the belly of a ship, and might have heard the seamen stamping and shouting and the note of the boatswain's whistle.' This cottage was of the variety known as 'cloth and paper,' a flimsy construction permitted by the kindly climate of California, and on winter nights, when the wind blew in strongly from the sea, its sides puffed in and out, greatly to the amusement of the 'Scot,' accustomed as he was to the solid buildings of his native land. It was, as he says, 'embowered in creepers', for over its front a cloth-of-gold rose spread its clinging arms, and over one side a Banksia flung a curtain of green and yellow.

It was during his stay in this house that we first realised the serious nature of his illness, and yet there was none of the depressing atmosphere of sickness, for he refused to be the regulation sick man. Every day he worked for a few hours at least, while I acted as amanuensis in order to save him the physical labour of writing. In this way the first rough draught of *Prince Otto* was written, and here, too, he tried his hand at poetry, producing some of the poems that afterwards appeared in the collection called *Underwoods*, although it is certain that he never believed himself to be possessed of the true poetic fire. Brave as his spirit was, yet he had his dark moments when the dread of premature death weighed upon him. . . .

While engaged in dictating, he had a habit of walking up and down the room, his pace growing faster and faster as his enthusiasm rose. We feared that this was not very good for him, so we quietly devised a scheme to prevent it, without his knowledge, by hemming him in with tables and chairs, so that each time he sprang up to walk he sank back discouraged at sight of the obstructions. . . .

Sickness and discouragement were not enough to keep down his boyish gaiety, which he sometimes manifested by teasing his womenfolk. One of his favourite methods of doing this was to station himself on a chair in front of us, and, with his brown eyes lighted up with a whimsical smile, talk broad Scots, . . . by the hour, until we cried for mercy. Yet he was decidedly sensitive about that same Scots, and his feelings were much wounded by hearing me express a horror of reading it in books. . . .

Here the scene changes again, this time to San Francisco, the city of many hills, of drifting summer fogs, and sparkling winter sunshine, the old city that now lives only in the memories of those who knew it in the days when Stevenson climbed the steep ways of its streets. Although he had something about him of the *ennui* of the much-travelled man, and complained that

> 'There 's nothing under heaven so blue
> That 's fairly worth the travelling to,'

yet no attraction was lost on him, and the Far Western flavour of San Francisco, with its added tang of the Orient, and the feeling of adventure blowing in on its salt sea-breezes, was much to his liking. My especial memory here is of many walks taken with him up Telegraph Hill, where the streets were grass-grown because no horse could climb them, and the side-walks were provided with steps or cleats for the assistance of foot-passengers. . . .

Once more the picture changes, now to the town of Calistoga—with its hybrid name made up of syllables from Saratoga and California—where we stayed for a few days at the old Springs Hotel while on our way to Mount Saint Helena, to which mountain-refuge Mr Stevenson was fleeing from the sea-fogs of the coast. . . .

Then back to San Francisco, where the only memory that remains is that of a confused blur of preparations for leaving—packing, ticket-buying, and melancholy farewells—for the time had come to return to old Scotland to introduce a newly-acquired American wife to waiting parents. . . .

Then came the parting, which proved to be eternal, for I never saw him again.

Memories.

GEORGE ST J. BREMNER.

I can remember Robert Louis Stevenson. I came across him frequently in San Francisco in the spring of 1880, although I never got to know him. I first saw him in a sort of half restaurant, half concert-hall, called 'St Ann's Rest.' He was sitting at a table with writing materials before him, and when the orchestra played, he would lay down his pen, light a cigarette, and listen to the music. When it stopped he would resume writing.

Stevenson was married by the clergyman (Dr W. A. Scott) who was also chaplain of St Andrews' Society, which is the principal Scottish organisation here. The very next day after Stevenson's wedding, another Scotsman, James R. Watson, a native of Dundee, was married by the same clergyman. Dr Scott mentioned the fact, and commented on the similarity of the brides, both being very small women, and both very dark.

It is a singular coincidence that, many years afterwards, when Stevenson was in Samoa, this Mr Watson was the purchasing agent for Moors, the Apia merchant and friend of Stevenson, and he frequently received orders with this memo., 'This is for your countryman R. L. Stevenson, so give it your best attention.'

The only time I was privileged to speak to, and be spoken to by, Stevenson, was when he was living in East Oakland, across the bay from San Francisco. His wife had given him a commission to buy something for her, and had given him a sample of it. He came into the Dry Goods Store where I was employed, and, holding out the sample, he asked me:

'Where's that?'

I directed him, and on his way out he stopped, and, addressing me, said: 'You are a Scotsman, aren't you?'

'Yes.'

'Where are you from?'

'Aberdeenshire.'

'Ah!'

Just then a woman stepped up and asked for something, and I had to attend to her. Stevenson waited a minute or two, and then left.

Of course at that time I did not know who he was, and it was not till years afterwards that I recognised, in the pictures of the celebrated writer, the man I had often seen in San Francisco.

REMINISCENCES.

JAMES CUNNINGHAM.

MY intercourse with Stevenson was comparatively slight in amount: ten days' companionship on an Atlantic liner, two visits of a day or less, the interchange of a few letters, this was the sum of our fellowship. And yet I seem to myself to have been really intimate with him: my affection for him was deep and lasting: in truth I loved the man at first sight, and I love him still. As Mrs Stevenson once said to me 'There is no one like Louis, is there?'

It was on the 7th of August 1880 that I first saw Stevenson. I was standing with a friend on the upper deck of an Atlantic liner in the harbour of New York, waiting impatiently for the moment when we should feel the screw revolve on the homeward voyage. Among the group of those who were to be our fellow-passengers my companion recognised an acquaintance, a youth, as he seemed, with a bright almost boyish look, and a peculiarly friendly smile. So I was introduced to Stevenson.

I had at that time, I think, not read a line of his writings, and owing to absence from home had heard little or nothing about him, but I fell under his spell from the first. It was easy to establish friendly relations with him. He has said somewhere that we travel to make friends: and, indeed, he gave himself trouble to collect friendships, as other travellers collect curios, of all orders of merit. The tedious Atlantic crossing, the more tedious perhaps on account of its brevity, meant for me on that occasion nine or ten days of Stevenson's talk, such talk as I had never before heard, and now do not expect ever to hear again. To the accompaniment of endless cigarettes, or sometimes, it might be, of a perilous cocktail which he compounded with much zest from a San Francisco recipe, the stream of his romantic and genial talked flowed on.

He was homeward bound from California, where he had been recently married. Mrs Stevenson was with him, a lady well fitted to be his companion and helper. He was fond of telling his experiences in California, 'Watching all the mighty whale-bones, lying buried by the breeze. Tiny sandy-pipers, and the huge Pacific seas.' His health had benefited by the climate there. One of his methods of cure had been to take a sun-bath by lying, without his clothes, on the house-top at noonday. He told us, too, how he had narrowly escaped being lynched. The woods around Monterey are hung with a long trailing moss, dry as tinder, falling from the branches of the trees to the ground. One day after he had lit his cigarette it occurred to him to apply the burning match to one of these festoons: in an instant the flame ran quickly beyond his reach up among the branches: he realised what he had done: he had started a forest fire. As he stood horror-struck, angry voices reached his ear from several directions, of men rushing to the spot, calling to one another to seize the malefactor. Then he ran, ran, he said, as he had never run before, and just escaped. Had he been caught, the nearest tree and a short rope would have 'eclipsed the gaiety of nations.'

We discovered that we had both been in our boyhood devotees of Captain Mayne Reid. He amused himself by getting me to recall what I could of *The White Squaw* and others of Reid's tales, and from these scraps he worked out a tale partly from memory, and largely from invention. As may be imagined he out-Reided Reid in this romantic improvisation.

When I came to read his books later I found they were of a piece with his talk: the Vailima letters give perhaps the best idea of his conversation at its best. There was the same romantic treatment of adventures, the same genial criticism of life without any of the bitterness of those who do not see life whole, the same veracity, for he never talked for talking's sake, nor uttered half-truths to make a point: his was a sincere wit. It was noticeable that he, great stylist as he was, concerned himself more with the matter than the manner of his favourite authors. With all his wide tolerance and his sympathy with the shady sides of life, he had the sound moral judgment of the Scot: he was a citizen of the world, but a native of Edinburgh. He was glad to think that the great teachers among men of letters, men like Carlyle and Browning, were men of good character.

The following letter from Blair Athole gives some account of his doings after his arrival in Edinburgh.

BLAIR ATHOLE.

MY DEAR CUNNINGHAM,—I am on my way to Strathpeffer, Ben Wyvis Hotel, there to stay perhaps two weeks. Thence I return to Edinburgh for say three; thence to London for October; and thence to Mentone, that being the Doctor's orders. I write this same post to Douglas and Foulis to send you my Burns; in Edinburgh I was so overwhelmed with affairs, my whole family having to be rigged out with wedding garments—what my mother significantly calls 'getting a few things in the meantime'—that I forgot my promise. I do trust at least that we may meet in other cities besides the city of Chester; that, my young friend, is not an abiding city. I sorrow for my Wilkins. My wife joins me in prayer—I mean in hopes—that after having met us in the morning of our day, you will 'come up with thy servant in

the afternoon.' You will observe I have been to church. Sam and I sat together and gently elapsed from the gathering about midway.—Yours,
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

I commit this pen to the infernal gods.

Remember us to Ogilvie.

Man, I liked the Scotch psalms fine.

And, man, of a' 'at ever I saw, I think I ne'er saw the beat o' Tummelside.

The article on Burns must have duly arrived, and after I had read it I wrote Stevenson a letter on the subject. The following is his reply.

17 HERIOT ROW, EDINBURGH.
[*No date.*]

MY DEAR CUNNINGHAM,—I have to thank you for a rare commodity: some intelligible criticism. The sentence about Burns in Paradise, I simply delete. You are right; I wrong. What I ought to have said was that many men could have warstled through with such surroundings but not Burns. My 'dark hint' was not meant to be one. I mean that the Highland Mary business, sandwiched, as it was, among other events, was not one on which Burns would care to expatiate. If you think I have overaccentuated the Don Juan business, it is not, I believe, my fault, but that of former biographers who have not only accustomed *you* to an evasive and sentimentalised treatment of that side, but left upon *me* the necessity of leaning upon it and at the same time reflecting other sides which have already been adequately ventilated. There is a difference between writing a life and a supplementary criticism.

I was pleased to see your quotation from Clough. I used it myself in an approximate form, and with a doubtful attribution to C., in another article—one on Villon; and was never since able to find if I were right.

I shall soon be in Edinburgh, and then perhaps we may have a meeting. I very sincerely hope so.

The Printing Press not yet having arrived, your wail for a greatcoat has not yet gone forth 'over the house-tops of the world.' My wife and Sam desire to be remembered. I am sure, from the little experiment already made, that I must flee from Scotland. It is, for me, the mouth of the pit.—Yours very sincerely,
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

The next time I saw the Stevensons was in the following summer of 1881. They were living in the little hamlet of Kinnaird, near Pitlochry; they lodged in a small farm-house on the left hand of the road as one goes to Kirkmichael: their sitting-room boasted only one small window which might have been the Window in Thrums as regards size: they were each engaged in writing a story at this time. I found them trying to solve a problem in connection with one of the stories, Mrs Stevenson's I think: it was to find a single word or epithet which should describe the shape of a man's shadow which had fallen half on the floor and half on the wall of a room. They invited my assistance and we hammered away at the difficulty for a long time without success: whether it was solved afterwards I do not know. He read part of his tale of *Thrawn Janet*, and it was in it, I think, that I suggested to him, as it was in Scots, the word 'chafts' instead of 'jaws,' which he had used. He pounced upon the word, which was new to him, with great eagerness. These two trifling incidents serve to show the elaborate care in word-fitting which Stevenson exercised in his work.

There is near Kinnaird, running down the bare slopes to the valley, a line of tree-tops and bushes that mark and at the same time conceal the course of a small stream which has furrowed for itself a deep channel as it flows to join the Tummel below. In this den the Stevensons had found a seclusion suited to their tastes: there we spent the greater part of a fine summer day. We sat by the side of the green-gray water which here flows over smooth stony slabs, with forty feet of green leaves above our heads; a charming place for such talk as we had. They had had adventures as usual. Mrs Stevenson was sitting one day sketching in a wood of fine larches which then skirted the rise of the road as it passes over the shoulders of Ben Vrackie. Suddenly the ground began to swim before her eyes and she felt that she was going to faint. She made an effort to rise and reach the road, and had just snatched up her drawing things and left the spot when the tree against which she had been leaning fell with a crash on the place where she had been. The waving motion of the turf caused by the loosening of the shallow spreading roots of the falling larch had produced the illusion of fainting and so had saved her life.

The westering sun was shining over the tops of the hills above Killiecrankie as I said good-bye to Stevenson on the road outside his cottage. His face wore a look which used to suggest to my fancy a resemblance to one of Raphael's Madonnas—the Sistine. I think it was the long oval of the cheek, and the radiant brown eyes, set rather wide apart, with a certain parallelism in their gaze, which suggested the likeness.

I saw him again two years later, in the spring, at his little villa, La Solitude, Hyères. He was just recovering from one of his bad illnesses, which had brought him to the point of death: but Mrs Stevenson and he insisted on my dining with them, as we were just passing through on our honeymoon. He was very much reduced in strength: he had been nearly blind and was still compelled to wear blue glasses, which however he removed in order to have a look at my wife. But the unconquerably gay spirit was still the same. He gave us a vivid account of his sudden seizure at a roadside railway station, and of the difficulty they had in getting him home: he complained humorously that he was deprived for the time of his three chief solaces, to walk, to talk, and to smoke cigarettes: but he signalised his convalescence on that evening by breaking through the two last restrictions. He told us how he had been refused admission, without reason given, to the gaming-tables of Monte Carlo, doubtless on account of his unconventional manner of dress: it was hard, as he said, to be turned away from a place which welcomed with open arms the off-scourings of Europe. The night before we were there something had fallen with a crash on their roof and a loud cry had been heard at the same moment in the lonely road outside their gate; these particulars were worked, half-seriously, half-jestingly, by our host, into an awesome mystery, so that when we left we felt quite eerie till we had reached the gas-lamps of the town. He was very humorous over an amanuensis who would treat him ceremoniously. His habit was to prepare himself so as to begin dictating the moment she entered. He would thus begin at once something in this way. 'The man drew the bloody dagger': to which she would reply 'This is a lovely day, Mr Stevenson': 'The man drew the bloody dagger', with increased emphasis. 'I hope you feel better to-day, Mr Stevenson': and so on.

I came away from him that evening feeling a great admiration for the courage that had looked at death so near at hand and was now again facing life with such unaffected cheerfulness. He wrote to me not long after this 'I keep a kind of even tenor of ill-health to which I begin to grow used. Health is but a prejudice.'

The following letter was received by Mrs Cunningham soon after the visit described above.

LA SOLITUDE, HYÈRES-LES-PALMIERS, VAR.

MY DEAR MRS CUNNINGHAM,—My wife is smitten with idiocy and can only babble friendly messages. As you proceed with married life, you will find that one of every couple is subject to such attacks when there falls anything to do. Take time by the forelock and Be you the Idiot. Years hence when I am old and horrible with snuff, you will come and bless me for this counsel.

We were delighted to hear better news of your husband. I wish Hyères had been the place that bettered him. But never mind. The next time you come, we shall be rich and we can all go roving in a party. I mean also to be in rude health and full manly beauty, the goggles discarded.

At least do come again. This has been a pleasant glimpse, and neither my wife nor I will give over hearkening for your chariot wheels.—Yours very truly, ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Stevenson had kindly promised to send us three of his woodcuts as a wedding present, and had given them in charge to a firm in London for despatch: they had been mislaid and delayed in transit. The 'wee bookie' was the *Child's Garden of Verses.*

Bonallie Tower, Branksome Park,
Bournemouth,
Jan. 9th, '85.

My dear Cunningham,—Believe me we have struggled with the Monster hitherto in vain; but your letter forwarded yesterday to the cavern where he lurks, may touch him up. I am delighted to see your fist, even in irony; as to your face, now that I am, (and I hope like to be) in this land of Freedom, why should we not see that also? I keep a kind of even tenor of ill-health, to which I begin to grow used. Health is but a prejudice. Really I have no reason to complain, and keep wonderfully fit for as little as possible, and like it.

I pray God you get the woodcuts soon; indeed, it is no fault of mine: the man to whom they were entrusted is a common pirate: in fact, (and in all seriousness) John Silver was partly founded upon him: can you wonder? a pyrat, he is: and a man without law; and has recently flitted, forbye. You seem to have flitted your nainsel. Well well, let us drop the subject. You shall get the woodcuts as soon as may be, and the pyrat wills, and I'll send you a wee bookie one of these days. And meantime, which is more important, when is there a chance of seeing you? We can take you both in and do for you with every circumstance of meanness. Won't you come? See, Mrs Kinnigam is a woman of sense: bring your husband here and no more ado.—Yours really very sincerely, Robert Louis Stevenson.

Stevenson a Candidate for the Chair of Constitutional Law at Edinburgh.

LORD SANDS.

I have really no claim to write personal reminiscences of Robert Louis Stevenson for I had no personal acquaintance with him. This was perhaps odd as the Thomas Stevensons were old friends of my mother. Her brother, Dr Maxwell Nicholson, was minister of St Stephen's, Edinburgh, from 1867 to 1874, and I believe the 'family theologian' sometimes took counsel with him in regard to the 'unsettling' tendencies of his son. The first time I ever heard of R. L. Stevenson was when I was a school-boy at St Andrews and Dr Nicholson mentioned in a letter to my mother that he had met Mrs Stevenson and she was immensely proud because a paper by Louis had been accepted by some leading magazine—the *Cornhill*, if I mistake not. My coming to Edinburgh in 1875 was contemporary with Stevenson being called to the Bar, and also with the beginning of his wanderings. The only place where I can definitely remember seeing him was in St Stephen's Church sitting next the door of the family pew, for, in these days, the pews had doors. But I was not infrequently entertained at 17 Heriot Row, though it always happened that Louis was absent. The old people were very kind to me. The good old formal Edinburgh dinner-party seems to have died out with the War. But Thomas Stevenson was fond of these entertainments and did them well. After-dinner smoking had not become general in the early 'eighties, so we sipped claret whilst our host denounced Mr Gladstone and all his works and sighed for Lord Palmerston. I recall how he explained that, though he was a Tory, he thought the best form of government for the country was a Whig ministry with only a narrow majority, as in the early 'sixties. He was an unexhaustible talker. Politics, theology, and hydrostatics are the subjects which I recall. Mrs Stevenson was keenly, though not obtrusively, interested in foreign missions. She looked very youthful beside her husband, and I recall how she once quizzingly rebuked me on the strength of a tale that I had referred to her as 'the old lady.' She generally saw the bright side of things and her husband the sombre.

The nearest I ever came to personal relationship with R. L. Stevenson was in the winter of 1881–82, when I was one of the members of the Bar who voted for him as a candidate for the Chair of Constitutional Law and History. When the vote was taken the supporters of Stevenson were directed to go into the Committee Room off the corridor to be counted. We were easily counted, for we were only nine; but William Mackintosh (Lord Kyllachy), C. J. Guthrie (Lord Guthrie), and Thomas Shaw (Lord Shaw), were in that room. We made a poor poll, but perhaps it is well that prophets were scarce. Stevenson was not suited for the post, but doubtless, had the distinction he was to achieve been generally foreseen, there would have been not nine but ninety and nine eager to vote for him.

My Meeting with Robert Louis Stevenson.

COUNCILLOR WILSON M'LAREN.

ONE of the chief events of my life was my making the acquaintance of 'the lang, lean chiel wha wore the velvet jaicket,' in the High Street of Edinburgh, in the early summer of 1881. That is forty years ago, but I shall never forget the meeting with R. L. S.

Stevenson had heard that I was credited with knowing something about the old houses and the old closes of the Royal Mile; and, although only on a hurried visit to the city of his birth, he found me out that summer afternoon at No. 6 Writers' Court, High Street. He was keenly interested in the rooms once occupied by the 'Star and Garter,' and jokingly referred to the 'high jinks' that were carried on in the days of our forefathers.

We left No. 6, with its quaint panelled apartments, and, ascending a few stone steps near the Writers' Court entrance to the Royal Exchange, found ourselves in the once famous John's Coffee House. Thence we crossed to No. 1, and, descending a long flight of steps, reached the subterranean passage occupied by M'Indo's shooting-gallery. That foul-smelling underground tunnel was much frequented by those who aspired to be crack shots with the rifle. I found R. L. S. to be no great marksman, as far as this long open shooting-range was concerned. We had six shots each, and he missed the stone target twice. We then beat a hasty retreat from the shooting-gallery, and a walk of a few yards up the High Street brought us to Advocates' Close, where Stevenson was particularly interested in the Scriptural texts cut out on the stone lintels of the doorways, and its dark, turnpike stairs.

We next visited a few places of historic interest in the Lawnmarket—Brodie's Close, Riddell's Close, and Lady Stair's Close; then, turning down by the Bowhead into Victoria Terrace, we reached the head of the Candlemaker Row. I drew my companion's attention to the granite fountain erected by the late Baroness Burdett Coutts to the memory of 'Greyfriars' Bobby,' in 1872, and mentioned the fact that, when a boy, I had given this faithful Highland dog a buttered 'bap' in Traill's dining-rooms near at hand. Stevenson was unacquainted with the touching story of this dog's fidelity to his dead master, and listened with great interest when I told him how, in 1858, the dog followed the remains of his master, a Midlothian farmer named Grey, to Greyfriars' Kirkyard, and lingered near the grave for almost fourteen years, until his death in 1872. We visited Greyfriars' Kirkyard, and Stevenson once again looked at the Martyrs' Monument and 'Bluidy Mackenzie's' tomb, which he had so graphically described in his *Picturesque Notes*.

Leaving the 'Westminster of Scotland,' we cut down the Middle Meadow Walk to George Square, and, after a look at the house where Sir Walter Scott lived when a boy, Stevenson asked me if I knew anything about Lord Braxfield. I had to confess my ignorance. With a smile he turned round, and, pointing up the Square to the house now occupied by the College of Agriculture, he said, 'Braxfield lived there—hot stuff in his day!' Undoubtedly, R. L. S. seemed to know the locality well.

From George Square Lane, after admiring the ample stretch of gardens belonging to the houses that looked to the Meadows, we turned into Buccleuch Place, and I pointed out the famous Old Assembly Rooms, and the house, No. 18, where Lord Jeffrey founded the *Edinburgh Review*. Buccleuch Pend was near at hand, and we had a look at the house where Robert Burns visited Willie Nicol of the High School, whom he immortalised in the song, 'Willie brewed a peck o' maut.' Crossing the street, we spent a few minutes in Buccleuch Kirkyard, where Mrs Cockburn, who wrote 'The Flowers of the Forest,' was laid to rest; and where Deacon Brodie, who is supposed to be prototype of Stevenson's 'Jekyll and Hyde,' was buried, after being hanged at the head of Liberton's Wynd.

Returning to the High Street, both of us hungry and thirsty, we entered a famous howff much frequented in those days by lawyers from the Parliament House, and which is still in existence; and there, in a back room, we sat down, like true Bohemians, to a feast fit for the gods—hot mulled porter, saveloys, and bread!

Such was my first and last meeting with Robert Louis Stevenson, the genius whose writings every leal-hearted Scot will not willingly let die.

RECOLLECTIONS.

ANDRÉ RAFFALOVICH.

HOW I wish I remembered more of R. L. S. and less of myself. I was only seventeen when I sent him a boyish article I had written in some French journal. He wrote to me from Davos—a characteristic letter with some oath never addressed to me before—and when he came to Paris we spent part of a day together. I called for him at the Hotel St Romain, I think; I saw his wife and Lloyd Osbourne, and carried my prize home. He was amused by my unexpected youth, I wondered what my parents would think of him. They liked him, he admired my mother, he rather shocked me by his emphasised admiration of an Andromeda by Henner; after lunch I took him for a drive in the Bois de Boulogne. Of his talk I chiefly remember his saying that he tried his ideas on every human being he met; his descriptions of Andrew Lang, Edmund Gosse, George Meredith, Sidney Colvin (who was so kind to me because of R. L. S. and because of his own kindness); his telling me to read *Leaves of Grass* as a cure for adolescent melancholy; and of his even stranger utterance that Baudelaire's *Femmes damnées* was comic and not wicked. He was as prodigal of his privately printed Davos works as I was lavish of them later on, giving them away to any one. I have not even the *New Arabian Nights* he gave me, nor a scrap of his writing.

Henry James alone could have made bunches of grape hang from so dry a vine as my memory of R. L. S I blame the ingratitude of youth, and I regret.

Stevenson's Advice.

THE REV. J. C. B. GEDDES.

I have only a very slight recollection of R. L. S. We met once at Matlock in Derbyshire, where he and his wife and his father and mother were staying. My mother knew his people and introduced me to him. I grieve to find I can recall no separate word or phrase of his talk. All I can remember is that he used the whole of the short time we were together to try to persuade me to study, not for the Church, which I had just decided to do, but for the Bar. The gist of what he said was that nowadays you can do more good outside the organised Church than inside it. It was while he was urging this very strongly that I noticed how curiously far apart his eyes were. They looked almost as though they had been set to keep quite separate watch at the corners of his head! This was strange, but not in the least displeasing—I have still a faint feeling of the charm and fascination of his look as he talked on very eagerly. Of course for the mere lad I then was, it was an exciting and proud moment. His friendliness, and the almost startling interest he took in the choice I was making, thrilled me.

The house where we were staying had an older and a newer part connected by a covered gangway or passage. Up and down this passage, each day for hours, the father and son walked arm in arm, the old man much the sturdier of the two. I believe they had been long apart. But there they were once more together. And I have this happy picture of them, reconciled and evidently enjoying one another.

Robert Louis Stevenson and the *Young Folks* Reader.

JAMES DOW.

When I was 'reader' for *Young Folks*, the weekly paper edited by Mr James Henderson, in which *Treasure Island*, *The Black Arrow*, and *Kidnapped* appeared in serial form, I had a visit from Mr Robert Louis Stevenson which I can remember with very great pleasure as one of the most interesting of my experiences.

The first instalment of a new adventure story, which was afterwards called *Treasure Island*, came into my hands in galley proof just after my return from my holiday, and when I was 'reading' it I was deeply impressed by the story and by the style.

'Who is this new writer?' I asked the 'copyholder.' 'His work is much better and more literary than anything else in the paper.'

We did not know anything about the author, but from that moment I took a great interest in his work, and I did my best to ensure very correct 'reading' of the proofs; and I must emphatically deny the statements which have been made, inferring that I amended the syntax and corrected the punctuation. Throughout the three stories that I 'read' for him I had no occasion to do either. In no instance did I alter the text, and I did my utmost to preserve the author's punctuation. In syntax he needed no coaching, and of punctuation he was a Master. The difficulty I had was to induce the compositors to 'follow the copy,' and to refrain from trying to improve the punctuation so carefully prepared for them.

The 'slips of the pen' to which I drew his attention—few and far between—were attributable to ill-health and human fallibility, and not to lack of skill. Two or three in *Treasure Island* were rectified on the proof; but the principal one in *The Black Arrow* caused me to write him the following note:

RED LION HOUSE.

TO THE AUTHOR.

DEAR SIR,—At the risk of incurring your displeasure, I venture to point out to you what may be an intentional omission but which, I think, is probably an oversight.

There were four black arrows, to be used with deadly intent. Three have been accounted for. In this concluding instalment the fourth is not mentioned; nor is there any indication of the fate of Sir Oliver, for whom the fourth arrow was evidently intended. This has occurred to me all the more forcibly because

Sir Oliver's dreadful terror of a violent death has been on more than one occasion so vividly represented.

Believe me, Sir, to be, not your critic, but your servant,

THE READER, Y. F.

The following is a literal copy of his reply:

LA SOLITUDE, HYÈRES-LES-PALMIERS, VAR.

TO THE READER.

DEAR SIR,—To the contrary, I thank you most cordially; indeed, the story having changed and run away from me in the course of writing, the dread fate that I had originally designed for Sir Oliver became impossible, and I had, I blush to say it, clean forgot him.

Thanks to you, Sir, he shall die the death. I enclose to-night slips 49-50-51; and to-morrow or next day, after having butchered the priest, I shall dispatch the rest.

I must not, however, allow this opportunity to go by without once more thanking you—for I think we have, in a ghostly fashion, met before on the margin of proof—for the unflagging intelligence and care with which my MS. is read. I have a large and generally disastrous experience of printers and printers' readers. Nowhere do I send worse copy than to *Young Folks*, for, with this sort of story, I rarely rewrite; yet nowhere am I so well used. And the skill with which the somewhat arbitrary and certainly baffling dialect was picked up, in the case of *The Black Arrow*, filled me with a gentle surprise.

I will add that you have humiliated me; that you should have been so much more wide-awake than myself is both humiliating and, I say it very humbly, perhaps flattering.

The reader is a kind of veiled prophet between the author and the public—a veiled, anonymous intermediary; and it pleases me to greet and thank him.—Your obliged servant,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON,
alias CAPTN. GEORGE NORTH.

This letter indicates the nature of the little services I rendered him, in common with scores of other authors during thirty odd years—(what good printers' reader would not do the like?)—and completely disposes of silly, untrue stories of amendments of punctuation and syntax.

And he must have been sincerely grateful; for months afterwards, when travelling by short stages from Edinburgh to Bournemouth, he stopped in London to see me, and unheeding Mr Henderson's entreaties not to attempt to mount the flights of stairs necessary (he was exceedingly ill), said, 'I will ascend the stairs and see the reader, though I die for it!' But he was so exhausted by the effort that when he entered the reading closet he was speechless.

It has been often stated in Red Lion House publications and other papers that Mr James Henderson changed the original title to 'Treasure Island,' yet that has not escaped something approaching contradiction. I will tell what I know. Mr Stevenson wrote on a sheet of notepaper (not his usual copy paper) four alternative titles—evidently for Mr Henderson's selection—the first of which was 'The Sea Cook; or The Voyage of the *Hispaniola*.' All but the first were cancelled, and that was put in type as the heading of the story, though I was informed that it was only temporary, as the correct title would be supplied later. Eight or ten days afterwards I received from Mr Henderson a slip proof on which he had deleted 'The Sea Cook' and above it written 'Treasure Island'; and so the story went to press.

Moveover in my interview with Mr Stevenson I referred to the criticism of *Treasure Island* in the *Saturday Review*, in which the writer, after referring to the fine character of the ship's cook, suggested that 'John Silver, Pirate,' would be an appropriate title. Mr Stevenson replied that he had read the review, and added, 'But Mr James Henderson wished the title to be "Treasure Island", and I deferred to him; he is the proprietor.' Nothing in his tone suggested disapproval, and he could not have 'deferred' to the wish of another unless he had been informed of it.

Skerryvore.

MRS VALENTINE A. BROWN, *née* ROCH.

WHENEVER my thoughts take me back to those happy days at Skerryvore, I feel grateful to the Fates which granted me those few years of close companionship with one who is beloved of all who knew him.*

To us—his servants—he was master and friend, teacher and physician.

From him I learned that life is not for self if we want happiness—and that it is only in service that we fulfil our destiny.

To give pleasure to others—to take what comes to us of good or bad in the same spirit, and make good, was his creed—and we in our humble place knew that he was doing it to a degree that was admirable.

Life at Skerryvore was not always easy. Owing to the master's state of health, and other things, it was sometimes hard to keep one's head up through the storm; but whenever we breasted the waves successfully, and came through smilingly, he was always ready to reward us, for he had watched the storm and almost always knew whence it came.

To us he was always the Doctor—and we called him so. I, when I was 'good', was Joe, and when 'bad', Thomassine—so that I could always tell if he were pleased with me.

I remember once when it had been a little harder than usual I came to him, summoned by his bell. He looked at me—so sad—and when I tried to justify myself, he said: 'Hush, Joe! You know when one tries to justify one's self, one puts someone else in the wrong—and life is not possible under these conditions.' And as I looked at him in surprise, he took my hand and said: 'That is all right, Joe—we understand each other, don't we?'

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* Valentine Roch, 'an extremely clever and capable French girl,' entered Mr and Mrs R. L. Stevenson's service in May 1883, and accompanied them to the Pacific Islands in August 1887.—[Ed.]

Another time, when I came to him in the morning he was busy writing, and hardly looked at me. I felt then that I was in disgrace. After I had attended to his wants and was ready to leave, he handed me a scrap of newspaper wrapper on which he had written:—

A dearer I do not know than Joe,
A sadder girl has rarely been than Thomassine,
Joe is my friend—so may she always be,
And for Joe's sake that darker Thomassine wants a true friend
in me.

But it was when he was left entirely alone to the mercies of the servants, as frequently happened, that we knew him best.

He was so dependent on us—and to him from whom love radiated to all around him some of it was bound to return.

When he was too ill even to read or write I felt we must amuse him some way or other, and we resorted to all kinds of clownish feats. Once I disguised myself in men's clothes and demanded an interview. He received me very politely and asked what he could do for me.

'A contribution for a library.'

'How much do you want?'

'Oh, anything you would give.

'Oh Joe you funny fellow why don't you ask for a pound—it is worth it.'

And so life went on at Skerryvore—sometimes we were children, and sometimes we were very serious indeed—when the life of our dear master was in danger. We did what we could always to alleviate his sufferings—but we did not know how.

Later on in my life, when I took to nursing as a profession, I learned what should have been done—and felt that our care of him had been nothing short of criminal. But he was always so grateful—for he knew that our mistakes and sometimes the fitfulness of our attentions were only due to our youth. One day he wrote this for me:—

If I could tell, if you could know,
What sweet gifts you give away
When you are kind like yesterday,
I think you would be always so.

I know that his teachings and the few years passed with him have helped me greatly to have a better conception of life—and later on when it came to a 'Parting of our ways' it helped to bear many injustices which nearly broke my heart.

But I am satisfied. I have had my day. And now, as I am getting old, I can look life in the face, and go on watering my sun flowers in my little garden.

Memories.

DR THOMAS BODLEY SCOTT.

NEARLY forty years ago, it fell to my fortunate lot to be called in to attend Robert Louis Stevenson and to help him to bear his burden for the next few years. He was then almost unknown and appreciated only by the discerning few. In his well moments he was the most delightful companion and conversationalist that one could imagine. I can see him pacing up and down his room, gesticulating in his forcible way and talking sometimes in English, sometimes in French, and very occasionally in Latin. If Henry James and W. E. Henley were there it was one of the *Noctes Ambrosianæ* never to be forgotten.

On his bad days, and they were very frequent, he made a fine fight to be cheerful, but, as he expressed it, his brain was in a condition of dry rot and it seemed to him always that it would never produce again, so the world became very dark; but this mood rarely lasted. I can recall one morning particularly; it was before his success was ensured, and when he was in financial difficulties, for his publishers especially were pressing him. It was the period of the shilling shockers, '*Called Back*', etc., and they were urging him, much against his inclination, to write such a book. He greeted me on my visit in the morning with these words,—'I 've got my shilling shocker,' and he described a dream that he had had in the night, the circumstantial foundation of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde.* This was carried to a completion in about a week, was rapidly in print, and formed the text of an eloquent sermon in St Paul's Cathedral directly afterwards. This little book raised him out of his partial obscurity into real popular appreciation. Thenceforward his fine literary position, which had begun with *Treasure Island*, was assured, and his fame became world-wide. Successes like this lifted him for a time out of his invalidism, but he was so often seriously ill that his work suffered or was delayed. Again and again his buoyant spirit brought him up to the surface, and his mind triumphed over his defective body. The phrase 'auto-suggestion' was at that time uninvented, but Dr Coué would have delighted in him: his imagination and his will-power were always coming to his rescue.

What a contrast and a lesson to most of us—who spend the greater part of our days auto-suggesting trouble and illness to ourselves, and who naturally get more or less what we suggest and what we deserve.

He was one of those delightful men who never attempt to formulate their philosophy nor their religion either to others or to themselves, who are content to be centres of radiation of light to the darkness of the world, and whose light grows not dim as the years pass by.

Needless to say, he was full of humour and sometimes of sarcasm, but always of the kindly sort. He valued fully any kindness shown to him, even from the most obscure and humble folk. His relations with his father, which had been somewhat strained in early life, became very cordial later, and each appreciated the other; the severity of the paternal presbyterianism became tempered by the kindly universalism of the son.

Stevenson *père*, however, when ill was a confirmed pessimist: I recall the joyful humour in Louis's face when he recounted this scene to me one morning. His father had an attack of jaundice and consequently many sleepless nights, which involved his wife in insomnia also; a night came when they both happily fell off to sleep, but in a few hours the poor lady was violently roused to hear this dreadful statement, in good pulpit Scots, 'My dear, the end is now come; I have lost the power of speech.'

In *Across the Plains* there is this bold statement which would deeply shock the Calvinistic moralist: 'Gentleness and cheerfulness, these come before all morality: they are the perfect duties. If your morals make you dreary, depend upon it they are wrong.' This is almost an auto-description; at the same time I must say his non-morality was a thing unknown to me. His friendship and his memory are my never-forgotten treasures.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

THOMAS HARDY, O.M.

THE memories I have of Louis Stevenson are very meagre, as I saw him but a few times. I met him once—possibly on the first occasion—at Mr (now Sir) Sidney Colvin's house at the British Museum. There were no other guests, and I can recall no particulars of the meeting further than that he said he liked wandering about the precincts of the Museum.

A more distinct image of him accompanies my recollections of the first and last visit he paid me at Dorchester, in August, 1885. He came out to my house unexpectedly from the King's Arms Hotel in the town, where he was staying for a day or two with Mrs Stevenson, her son, and a lady who was Louis's cousin. He said that they were on their way to Dartmoor, the air of which he had been told would benefit him. He appeared in a velveteen jacket, with one hand in a sling. I asked him why he wore the sling, as there seemed nothing the matter with his hand: his answer (I am almost certain) was that he had been advised to do it to lessen the effort of his heart in its beats. He particularly wanted to see the room I wrote in, but as I had come into the house quite recently I had not settled into any definite writing-place, and could only show him a temporary corner I used. My wife and I went the next day to call on them at the hotel just before they left, where we bade them good-bye, expecting next to hear of them from Dartmoor. To our great surprise and regret a letter from Mrs Stevenson arrived about three weeks later, dated from an hotel in Exeter, and informing us that Louis had been taken ill on reaching that city, and could get no further; and that they were coming back to Bournemouth immediately he was well enough to travel.

From this point my mind is a blank, excepting as to one fact—that shortly after the publication of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* in the May of the following year, he wrote to ask if I would permit him to dramatise it, as he had read the story, and thought Henchard 'a great fellow', adding that he himself was keeping unusually well. I wrote back my ready permission; and there the matter ended. I heard no more about the play; and I think I may say that to my vision he dropped into utter darkness from that date: I recall no further sight of or communication from him, though I used to hear of him in a roundabout way from friends of his and mine. I should add that some years later I read an interview with him that had been published in the newspapers, in which he stated that he disapproved of the morals of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, which had appeared in the interim, and probably had led to his silence.

STEVENSON A GODFATHER.

R. A. ROBERTSON.

DEAR MISS MASSON,—I am sending you with this three letters from R. L. S. These have never been published, and you may think them worthy of inclusion in your forthcoming book.

R. L. S., if he had lived, would now have been the same age as myself. I first met him at an early period through my close friendship with his cousin R. A. M. S. I think this must have been about 1867, or possibly earlier. During the next few years the three of us were much together, but soon health compelled R. L. S. to make prolonged absences from Edinburgh, and I then saw him only during his summer visits. His genius was then in the ascendant and I became conscious of a befittingly reverent attitude. After I married in 1875, however, my wife helped in a revival of the old relationship, and our friendship continued with occasional glimpses of him until he finally left this country.

The letters I send you tell their own tale; but perhaps a word is desirable by way of explanation. R. L. S. was Godfather to one of my boys, and it would appear that he had promised my wife a copy of the *Child's Garden of Verses* for him. The first letter, dated 11th March 1885, sends the book; and, if I may venture to say so, it is particularly interesting in the reason for the appeal for 'a special grace for this little person,' showing his wonderful understanding of child-nature. The book arrived shortly after my boy's death. We found that the copy sent to us was inscribed to Sargent. On hearing of this, R. L. S. wrote the second letter (undated). Then follows the third letter, dated 22nd October, sending another copy of the *Child's Garden* with the special sonnet in it.—Yours sincerely,

R. A. ROBERTSON.

BONALLIE TOWER, BOURNEMOUTH,
March 11*th*, 1885.

DEAR MRS ROBERTSON,—My publishers have played me a sad trick or you should have heard from me long since; but I waited every day to have the book, of which I now inclose an early copy. I fear my Godson will scarce be able to read it for awhile; but I do most earnestly hope he will be much more healthy and no less happy than I was, in that strange period of man's life through which he must now begin to pass. A Godfather is a merely ornamental figure; and I believe a very good thing; but let me beg a special grace for this little person: let me ask you not to expect from him a very rigid adherence to the truth, as we peddling elders understand it. This is a point on which I feel keenly that we go often wrong. I was myself repeatedly thrashed for lying when Heaven knows, I had no more design to lie than I had, or was capable of having, a design to tell the truth. I did but talk like a parrot. I think I will take the liberty of sending you another of my books: of which I ask you to try to read nothing but the paper called 'Child's Play'; which will more fully plead my cause and that of the little ones.

Please observe, dear Mrs Robertson, the curious piece of writing which I have enclosed in lines. This sheet was taken from near the middle of a packet; and here had some one, probably before the paper was folded, written on this corner the word 'She.' It sounds mysterious nor can I throw light upon the mystery; but I thought it right to explain that it was no fault of mine.

Believe me, with every good wish for the youngster,

Very truly yours, ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

MY DEAR MRS ROBERTSON,—I hope you will not trouble to write to me just now. This has been a very short story, but thank God, we cannot suppose it to be at all a sad one for the child.

'Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,' the song says, as good as many texts; and into that zone of quiet, the child has gone very straight. It is sad for you, and for Robertson; sad too, for me—for this was after all a little fellow on whom a childless man might look, in the future, with a half-sense of property; but happily not sad for him, who has escaped out of the snare, and gone straight home.

Please ask your husband to return me Sargent's copy—it was Sargent the painter, and I had mixed the parcels; I shall see that you get back the right one.

Meanwhile believe me, with all sympathy,

Yours very truly, ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

SKERRYVORE, BOURNEMOUTH,
Oct. 22, 1885.

MY DEAR ROBERTSON,—After a long summer of uselessness and sickness I am beginning to try to get my shattered affairs into order; one of the first things I find, is that I have never sent you the copy of my book, in which your child's name was written, and to which I have added a few lines to yourself and Mrs Robertson. I hope you will excuse this delay and take the verses as they were intended.

Believe me, My dear Robertson,

Yours very truly, ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

P.S.—Oblige me by not speaking of my state of health. You will remember I am sure that you live in the same town with my father, and that he is an old man? A word goes easily and might have cruel consequences. R. L. S.

(The following is the 'Special Sonnet' written by Stevenson in the copy sent of *A Child's Garden of Verses.*)—[ED.]

Before this little gift was come,
The little owner had made haste for home;
And from the door of where the eternal dwell,
Looked back on human things and smiled Farewell.
O may this grief remain the only one!
O may your house keep still a garrison
Of smiling children; and forever more
The tune of little feet be heard along the floor!
April 3rd, 1885. R. L. S.

REMINISCENCES.

WILLIAM ARCHER.

MY clearest personal recollection of Stevenson relates to his last evening in England. I called upon him about eight o'clock at Armfield's Hotel—I think that was the name—close to Finsbury Circus. He was sitting up in bed, in a large, well-lighted room. The moment I arrived, he told me that he was in a difficulty: his steamer for New York sailed from Tilbury first thing next morning, and it had just occurred to him that he wanted legal advice as to a codicil he proposed to add to his will—could I possibly get hold of a lawyer for him? Nowadays, in such a case, one would have turned immediately to the telephone-directory; but at that time the telephone was barely struggling into use. All lawyers' offices were of course closed, and I did not know the private address of even a solicitor's clerk. After consultation with Mrs Stevenson, however, I agreed to do the best I could, and set off in quest of a nocturnal jurisconsult. Though not then a member of any club, I knew several men who belonged to the National Liberal. Thither I betook myself and asked for Mr (now Sir) Henry Norman, trusting that he might be able to introduce me to a solicitor. I found him in company, not with a solicitor, but with a barrister—Mr A. H. Spokes, afterwards Recorder of Reading. As soon as I had stated the case, Mr Spokes very kindly placed himself at my service, and I returned with him in triumph to Armfield's Hotel. The scene of the following half-hour is graven on my memory. Mrs Stevenson and I sat talking at one end of the room, while in the further corner Mr Spokes, at the bedside, engaged in close confabulation with the testator. Louis (always pronounced

Lewis) still wore his hair rather long, and, as it was not very abundant, it fell in straggling wisps round his long, lank, ivory face. A claret-coloured blanket, faded and stained, hung round his shoulders; I am not sure that it was not a poncho, or blanket with a hole cut for the head. His knees were drawn up as a rest for his writing-materials; and, with all its gauntness, there was a certain grace about the curves of the figure. The well-known relief of Stevenson in bed fairly represents the attitude; but the colour and the chiar'oscuro would have been worth recording.

I stayed a short time after Mr Spokes had left, but can recall only one snatch of our conversation. There lay on the bed a complete set of a pocket edition of the works of a certain novelist, now dead,—a gift, I fancy, from the author. I remarked that I had a great respect for this writer, but could not read him. 'Between ourselves,' said Stevenson, in a low voice, 'no more can I.' The novelist, of course, was not Meredith, whom Stevenson read with avidity. He once surprised me, I remember, by calling *Rhoda Fleming* his greatest work.

Of the many long talks I had with Stevenson in his Bournemouth days, I am extremely sorry to confess that only one fragment remains quite clear in my memory. I used to criticise the resolute, aggressive optimism of his philosophy, and accuse him of a certain deliberate *suppressio veri*—a tendency to cook his accounts with Destiny. One evening I had been talking in this strain, and saying, I suppose, that he did not make enough allowance for the amount of sheer boredom involved in existence. He was pacing up and down the drawing-room at Skerryvore, with his swift, somewhat feline tread, his arm in a sling, and a ragged cigarette in his fingers. As soon as he heard the word 'boredom', he turned sharply round upon me, and said with slow, impressive emphasis: 'I never was bored in my life!' I might have retorted, but probably didn't, that this was a fine example of the *suppressio veri* wherewith I reproached him.

His character-sketches and anecdotes of odd personalities which he had encountered were among the most delightful features of his talk. I remember especially his stories of an American artist named B—— in whom he took great delight. B—— was one day observed outside an inn at Barbizon, in a posture of deep dejection, his arms resting on a table and his head buried in his hands. Some one went up to him, slapped him on the shoulder, and said, 'Hallo, B——! what's the matter?' The artist looked up and replied with great solemnity, 'I am old—I am poor—and I am bald!' and bowed his head once more under the weight of these afflictions. On another occasion Stevenson accompanied him to a pianoforte recital given by Sir Charles Hallé at the old St James's Hall, on the site of the present Piccadilly Hotel. On leaving the hall they walked down Piccadilly in utter silence till they reached the corner of the Green Park, where B—— lifted up his voice and said: 'The proceedings—of the aged statesman—at the piano—were austere and chilling.' No one who remembers 'the aged statesman' can fail to realize the terse felicity of this appreciation.

Stevenson or another — perhaps I myself — may already have told these anecdotes in print. Bad as my memory is, I can vouch for the literal accuracy with which I record the sayings of B—— as Stevenson related them.

Stevenson at the Leper Settlement.

BROTHER JOSEPH DUTTON.

. . . But, for your R. L. S. book, if it can possibly be in time, this item might be a good one. I shall write it out on separate sheets, hoping it *will* be in time. . . .

Notes written by me, Joseph Dutton, at Kalawao, Molokai, Territory of Hawaii, giving a brief account of an edifying visit to the Leper Settlement by *Mr Robert Louis Stevenson*, about May 1889.* Written while fresh in the memory for a friend, who passed the notes—as written—to Prof. John O'Connor Jr., of Mellon Institute, University of Pittsburgh, who requested data to complete a sketch he was preparing, for private distribution. Its title was *Of the Chivalry of Christ.* It was published by The Aldine Press, Pittsburgh, 1916. I am copying from that now, not having kept any retain copy. If the notes are now used in this work treating of Mr Stevenson, it would be just to credit Prof. O'Connor Jr. and his lovely little book.

Very Respectfully, JOSEPH DUTTON.

KALAWAO, MOLOKAI.
July 20th, 1922.

THE NOTES :—

Dr Swift (the Settlement physician) had mentioned to me about some writer there (Kalaupapa)† but I did not pay attention to it, so when Mr Stevenson called at our old place I did not know who he was. He came in the latter part of his week here (on this Island)—I was busy, and looked for someone to show him over the place—the old home—but saw no one suitable. The crowd with me were having sores dressed. Mr Stevenson looked cool and pleasant in yachting cap and suit. Name on capband 'Casco.' I said he would have to take me. He dismounted and we went over the place together, and saw the bad cases. He was sympathetic.

Mr Stevenson was highly interested, and showed it in sympathetic feeling and expression. Highly strung organization and temperament, quick to feel, quick to love—a very affectionate disposition. Seemed as if he had not completed his plans. He was looking for a place wherein to end his days—weak—inquired as to danger of contracting leprosy here—how it would be with one advanced with other disease. He knew of course his physical condition, I could judge only partly. His objects were only suggested; but when I knew—later—who he was and more of him, these thoughts seemed more clear—that he was going to put himself away somewhere to spend his dying years.

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* It was of this visit that R. L. S. wrote : 'I can only say that the sight of so much courage, cheerfulness, and devotion strung me too high to mind the infinite pity and horror of the sights.'—[ED.]

† The medical headquarters.—[ED.]

I heard the same gentle melody, observed the same earnest desire, that had been features of my own aim and hungry search for what might be my greatest good while trying to do good for others.

Looking over the old place, quaint and strange to him,—quaint now to me, as memory goes back to those days,—as we walked and looked, particularly seeing and sympathising with all of the sick and far advanced cases, and as we talked even to the time of his remounting the horse and slowly walking toward the gate, he seemed more and more interested, and with consummate skill drew from me the motives that controlled me in coming here. He showed a deep sympathy with those motives and inquired very particularly as to the life here.

When I heard he had located at Samoa the thought came back that when here he was 'looking around.' Considering his family, however, he could hardly have settled here even if he ever thought of it.

From H. J. Moors's *With Stevenson in Samoa.*

EARLY in December 1889, the schooner *Equator*, with Stevenson on board, entered Apia harbour. I went aboard. A young-looking man came forward to meet me. He appeared to be about thirty years of age, although really nine years older, of fair and somewhat sallow complexion, and about five feet ten inches in height. He wore a slight, scraggy moustache, and his hair hung down about his neck after the fashion of artists. This was Stevenson—R. L. S., 'the best-loved initials in recent literature'—and I knew it even before he spoke. He was not a handsome man, and yet there was something irresistibly attractive about him. The genius that was in him seemed to shine out of his face. I was struck at once by his keen, inquiring eyes. Brown in colour, they were strangely bright, and seemed to penetrate you like the eyes of a mesmerist. . . . Stevenson was charmed with Samoa, and he bubbled over with delight as one enchanted. The prospect that opened out before him seemed to get into his very veins. 'It's grand!' he exclaimed. . . . I needed not to be told he was in indifferent health, for it was stamped on his face. He appeared to be intensely nervous, highly strung, easily excited. When I first brought him ashore he was looking somewhat weak, but hardly had he got into the street (for Apia is practically a town with but one street) when he began to walk up and down it in a most lively, not to say eccentric, manner. He could not stand still. When I took him into my house, he walked about the room, plying me with questions, one after another, darting up and down, talking on all sorts of subjects, with no continuity whatever in his conversation. His wife was just as fidgety as himself, Lloyd Osbourne not much better. The long lonesome trip on the schooner had quite unnerved them, and they were delighted to be on shore again. . . .

At last one day Stevenson told me he would like to make his home in Samoa permanently. 'I like this place better than any I have seen in the Pacific,' he said. He had been to Honolulu, and liked it; Tahiti and the Marquesas had pleased him; but of all places he liked Samoa the best. 'Honolulu's good—very good,' he added; 'but this seems more savage!' . . .

When in a rage he was a study. Once excite him, and you had another Stevenson. I have seen him in all moods. I have seen him sitting on my table, dangling his long legs in the air, chatting away in the calmest manner possible; and I have seen him, becoming suddenly agitated, jump from that table and stalk to and fro across the floor like some wild forest animal, to which he has, indeed, been already compared. His face would glow and his eyes would flash, darkening, lighting, scintillating, hypnotising you with their brilliance and the burning fires within. In calm they were eyes of strange beauty, with an expression that is almost beyond the power of pen to describe. 'Eyes half alert, half sorrowful,' said our common friend, Mr Carruthers, once; and I have neither read nor heard anything which seems to approach so near the mark. They carried in them a strange mixture of what seemed to be at once the sorrow and joy of life, and there appeared to be a haunting sadness in their very brightness. . . .

Stevenson rose as a rule at six o'clock, though he was up, often enough, as early as four, writing by lamp-light. He wrote at all hours, and at all times. Oftentimes he would come down town on 'Jack' and tell me he had got 'stuck' in some passage of a story and was out in search of an inspiration. 'The orange is squeezed out,' he would say. He used generally to wear a little white yachting cap worth about twenty-five cents. As he was very thin and boyish in appearance, the cap suited him. I never saw him in a stiff shirt nor a stand-up collar in my life. Up at Vailima they all went about in their bare feet, except when expecting guests, and generally looked about half-dressed. When Stevenson came into Apia he still looked only half-dressed. He always came down with a soft shirt on and generally white flannel trousers, sometimes with a red sash tied round the waist. He was very careless about his personal adornment, just 'a man of shirt-sleeves'; and his clothes invariably had the appearance of being a misfit, because of his extremely slight frame. . . .

Stevenson was a charming host, and it mattered not whether he was receiving Europeans or natives. Everybody felt thoroughly at home at Vailima. There were invariably several dinner-parties there when a British or American warship put into port. In him the navy had a great champion, and he used to have a printed list of the warships that had been to Apia fixed up in front of his house, and every succeeding ship that arrived duly had its name printed there. To meet the officers from these ships a number of friends would be invited to Vailima, for the afternoon and evening. While dinner was being prepared the guests would sit on the wide veranda, smoking and talking, and an 'appetiser' would be handed round. Those were happy times. Stevenson the writer, the talker, the charmer, was in his element. He loved to have friends around him. Over the dinner plates he entertained the company with his anecdotes. But he never monopolised the conversation; he was as ready a listener as he was a ready talker. After dinner, music, or more smoking and more talking on the veranda—and coffee par excellence—coffee the sugar in which had first of all been soaked in burnt brandy! . . .

MEETINGS ON THE PACIFIC.

CAPTAIN JOHN CAMERON.

I can remember Robert Louis Stevenson—my first meeting with him, if my memory does not play me false, occurred in 1890. I was acting as supercargo on the schooner *Lizzie Derby*, owned by A. Crawford and Co., San Francisco. The vessel was on a trading trip through the Gilbert Islands, from the firm's trading-station at Jaluit, Marshall Islands. While trading at the Island of Tarawa, Gilbert group, the steamer *Janet Nicoll*, owned by Henderson and Macfarlane of Sydney, on a trading expedition, dropped anchor close to the *Lizzie Derby*. I went on board to have a yarn with the captain and officers whom I knew. R. L. S. was having a game of chess with the chief engineer. I knew Mr Stevenson immediately from being familiar with his photos in many papers. He was dressed in light marching order, a thin cotton undershirt, blue serge pants held up by a red sash, barefooted and bareheaded—just a comfortable rig for that part of the world. After being introduced to him, I remarked that I had just finished reading his book *Prince Otto*. He asked my opinion of the book, and I told him it was well written but the story did not appeal to me. While we were talking about the merits of the book, Mrs Stevenson joined us, and, Mr Stevenson informing her of my comments on *Prince Otto*, they both had a hearty laugh over my criticism of the book. Well, when Greek meets Greek then comes the tug-of-war; when Dutch meets Dutch then comes the lager beer; not being Dutch, we, Mr and Mrs Stevenson and myself, went below to wet our whistles with some stout; if I remember well it was Guiness's. As the *Janet Nicoll* was making a call at a distant station on the same island, I stayed on board, coming back to my vessel overland after a good soaking, the boat getting swamped in the surf. I regret very much that my recollections of our conversation cannot be recalled. What I do remember was giving R. L. S. the history of the *Wandering Minstrel* disaster and a letter to our Manager in Jaluit, a Mr Anderson, to permit Mr Stevenson to have access to my notes concerning the wreck.

My next meeting with R. L. S. happened in Apia, Samoa. I was Master of the schooner *Ebon* and sailed from Jaluit in 1891 or 1892, taking along, as passengers, Captain Lovdahl, his wife and two children; their vessel, the *Pannonia*, was wrecked in the Marshall group, and to get back to San Francisco, it was necessary to catch the mail steamer at Apia. While I was in Mr Moors's store on business, R. L. S. came in, dressed pretty much the same as when I saw him on board the *Janet Nicoll*, only that his pants were rolled up, nearly to his knees, and he had a well-worn straw hat on. He was quite surprised to see me in Samoa, asking what good wind blew me there. He rode into Apia on an old white plug of a horse that had seen better days—it reminded me of the plug with many points that Mark Twain hired in Honolulu. I can remember but very little of our conversation then; he advised me strongly always to wear woollen underclothing to prevent my catching cold. That was the last time I saw R. L. S.; what a delightful character he was! So very unassuming and attractive.

Trifling Memories of R. L. S.

ROBERT SCOT-SKIRVING, M.B., C.M.

I first saw Stevenson in Great Stuart Street, in Edinburgh, at the house of Fleeming Jenkin, and I remember well his curious eager face, and bright eyes, and quaint clothes, not violently suitable to the time and place. He had longish hair, some kind of soft shirt, a black short velvet coat, and either then or later some sort of jersey. I daresay many of us would say that his general rig was affected and foolish—perhaps it was; but such was the compelling charm of R. L. S. that, in him, oddities like those of clothes had a kind of charm, while in others, I am afraid—now, at any rate—I would say, 'Who is that affected young fool?' Apropos, Stevenson loved fooling, and he did it so well! I remember Mrs Fleeming Jenkin, whom all we young people held in no small awe, being a little put out by Stevenson's lateness in coming one night. In walked R. L. S., clad in the garments of unconventionality, but with a smile against which one couldn't keep a stiff face. 'I'm sorry—but why did you wait for this withered rose-bud?' How I remember a speech so trifling I can't say, except that one recollected almost anything he said—especially tomfoolery. One night my sister, who greatly admired him, was at supper next him. He turned, and said, 'Could you eat three Bath buns before breakfast?' 'Yes, I could in Islay,' replied my sister. 'Thank God, you are yet young!' said R. L. S.

Many years later, after I had settled in Sydney, Stevenson came there more than once. I rang him up at his hotel, for in Sydney we had telephones even then, and his voice replied—I remembered it at once. He had a marked but agreeable Lothian accent. He said, 'Are you the man who acted at the Jenkins' theatricals?' I modestly said that I had been call-boy! He then came to my house, and I spent various evenings with him. He was very full of writing an account of the navigational knowledge of the South Sea Islanders as explanatory of the populating of islands so widely separated from each other. He never carried out this piece of work. I talked much with him on this subject and on sea-things. He had a good landman's knowledge of ships, but not a technically correct one, as some errors in his sea-stories show.

On one occasion his mother, and I think his cousin Graham Balfour, (who went out sailing with me), and I, spent an evening, in which we agreed to talk broad Scots. R. L. S. was at his best—witty, learned, and wholly delightful. On this occasion he had his stepson and step-daughter with him. Stevenson had a bad bronchial attack on one of his visits to Sydney. His wife looked after him. I went to call on him while he was seedy, and I noted that Mrs Stevenson saw to his welfare. Before he wrote the long paper on Father

Damien I happened to see him, and I asked him what he was doing with himself. 'Well,' said he, 'for the next few days I propose to devote myself to writing a libel—but it will be a justified and a righteous one.' I think he wrote it in the Union Club in Sydney.*

His mother, when I saw her in Sydney, was a most attractive lady—good-looking, bright, and alert-minded—a fit mother for such a son. I cannot recall the personality of his father. It is so difficult after all these years to remember conversations,—even with a Stevenson. It is the general look of the man and his extraordinary vivid personality that remain with me—I who knew him in the flesh.

TUSITALA: A NEW REMINISCENCE OF R. L. S.

REV. S. J. WHITMEE.

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IT was on a Monday morning in 1891, before ten o'clock, that I received my first visit from Robert Louis Stevenson, who rode down from Vailima thus early to call on me on my arrival at Apia, the principal Samoan port, to which I had sailed from San Francisco.

Samoa was no new land to me, for I had laboured there from 1863 to 1878, but in 1891 I was asked by the Directors of the London Missionary Society to return there on a special mission, and within forty-nine days of receiving the request, I landed on a Sunday morning once again in the island.

It was a great surprise and a great pleasure so soon to meet R. L. S. He told me he would have called on the day of my arrival; but, knowing how strictly the Samoans kept Sunday, he did not risk compromising me in their eyes. He said that since the news of my coming arrived a month before, he had been anticipating seeing me, for in his study of the Samoan language he had been greatly helped by the additions I had made to Mr Pratt's grammar, from the second edition of which he was learning the language.

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* The famous '*Letter to Dr Hyde*,' a defence of Father Damien. Written in February 1890, at the Union Club, Sydney.—[ED.]

Before the first week was ended I rode up to Vailima to return Mr Stevenson's call. I intended to make my visit short; but in that I literally 'reckoned without my host.' A short visit there I afterwards found to be almost an impossibility. Both Mr and Mrs Stevenson on that day combined to defeat my intention. Mrs Stevenson had an idea that I was a botanist and a gardener. She had started a kitchen-garden on a plot of cleared forest land a little distance from the house, and was making experiments with vegetables not indigenous to the Tropics.

By the time we were back at the house it was nearly time for luncheon, and R. L. S. had prepared a salad, at which culinary art he was a specialist. To him the salad was all the better because the vegetables in it were from his wife's garden, and I could, without any lack of sincerity, praise both the ingredients and their combination.

After luncheon we went on to the balcony in front of the drawing-room. This overlooks the undulating forest down to the sea; and beyond, a vast expanse of ocean is visible. Stevenson was that day free from pain, in high spirits, and in his best mood for conversation. I noticed several of his characteristics. He was as active and restless as if his veins had been filled with quicksilver. He had a cigarette between his fingers, and occasionally between his lips; but it was constantly going out after a few puffs. There was a strong rail running along the front of the balcony for safety. He, like the rest of us, had a chair; but he occupied it only a few minutes at a time. Then he strode along the balcony, and poised himself upon the rail. Anon, he slid off, took a few steps, and dropped into his chair. Sometimes he came and stood immediately in front of me, discussing some matter or other. . . .

One morning R. L. S. rode down to Apia and called on me in order to make a special request. But he wished me to promise that I would not grant it if I had any scruple about giving my time to what he was about to ask from me. He said he wanted some help in his study of the Samoan language, especially the idioms, and he would not ask for more than one hour a week. I suggested that each Monday he should ride down to Apia for tea at five o'clock at Mr and Mrs Clarke's, where I boarded, and I would give him an hour after, which was a missionary's one leisure hour before lamps were lighted for evening work. In a delicate way R. L. S. said he knew I would not accept remuneration, but he would see that the Missionary Society should not suffer loss. At each Missionary meeting in May, while he was my pupil, there was a contribution which did not come from a Samoan. Mr Stevenson wished to write a story in Samoan for the natives, and I suggested that he should bring a portion of his MS. for me to read aloud and criticise. This exactly suited him. Those points in grammar and idiom, also the appropriateness of words, about which he was almost fastidious, could be discussed. I found him to be a keen student; and the peculiarities and niceties of the language greatly interested him. He thought the language was wonderful, and quite agreed with me that the Samoans must have descended from a much higher condition of intellectual culture, to possess such a tongue. The extent of the vocabulary, the delicate differences of form and expressive shades of meaning, the wonderful varieties of the pronouns and particles, astonished him. The hour we spent together was always a treat to the teacher whatever it might be to the pupil.

When the weather was bad, Mrs Stevenson wisely exercised her influence to keep him at home; and sometimes he was not well enough to come. Then he sent a messenger with an explanation. I always knew some time before the hour when he was not coming. Generally he sent a short note. These notes were sometimes amusing. Here is a copy of one: 'My dear Mr Whitmee, the weather seems impossible, and my family will not let me go. Please excuse The Class.' Another was sent the only time that he played truant. It is: 'My dear Count Whitmee, I have just finished a novel, which you will understand if you consider it's like a hundred and twenty sermons on end—I simply cannot put my mind to Samoan or anything else. I am like an empty bag. I can, and I will, do nothing. Your unfruitful pupil, Tusitala.' The novel just finished was *Catriona.* Two of his letters sent when he was prevented from coming to his lessons with me show that he was reading the Samoan Bible for practice. His notes were seldom dated. . . .

When Mr Stevenson decided to settle as a resident in Samoa, the question of his name had to be considered. In the Samoan language no syllable contains more than one consonant and every syllable ends with a vowel. Had the natives Samoanised his name—that is, given it a form which they could pronounce—they would have made it Setevinisoni, a name six syllables long, which would have been intolerable to him.

I was informed by a person who was present when the form of his name was being discussed, that the late Rev. J. E. Newell, then one of the tutors of the Malua L.M.S. College, said, 'Why not *Tusitala?*' This means 'Writer of Stories,' *tusi*, to write, and *tala*, a story or stories, according to the particle which precedes it. The suggestion was acclaimed by all who heard it, and no one gave it greater approval than Stevenson himself.

It was his only name used by Samoans. It was a name, a title, and a description of his occupation, all in one word. . . .

Tusitala was greatly interested in a high school for promising young women from all the Samoan Islands, under the care of two lady missionaries, the founding of which I had undertaken. As this was half-way between Apia and Vailima, we often met there.

Stevenson seldom wrote after noon, and was always glad to have a friend with him after his work was done. It was often my privilege to be that friend. Sometimes he rode to Papauta to fetch me; but I had no scruple about going uninvited for lunch, being quite sure of a welcome.

STEVENSON IN SYDNEY, 1893.

REV. WILL BURNETT, B.D.

STEVENSON came up to Sydney in February of 1893. It was not a very successful holiday, for he struck the season when the climate of Sydney is at its most depressing state. A combination of heat and moisture, suggestive of a Chinese laundry, a breeze from the ocean that brings no coolness but indeed an aggravation of discomfort, a night that is less refreshing than the day—these were not likely to make for Stevenson's health and comfort; and he spent part of the time in bed.

As might be expected it was through the Church that I came to meet him. I was then Minister of a Presbyterian Church in Sydney. It was the time of the General Assembly: and that clerical gathering, hearing that Stevenson was in the city, sent 'a deputation' (the proper course for a Church Court) to call on Stevenson in his hotel. The Assembly being not too numerous, the representative elders had the praise-worthy practice of providing lunch for the members every day in the Hotel Australia. The deputation, who (I think) found Stevenson sitting in his familiar position in bed with a writing-board on his knees, asked him to be the guest of the Assembly at one of these lunches, and he accepted the invitation. The joyful day arrived, the weather was slightly more agreeable, and the guest was able to be present.

I found myself not far from him, and able to study him when he rose to speak—a man rather over medium height, his height apparently increased by an exceeding thinness; a magician who drew to him your heart as well as your eyes. But it was your eyes first: they sought their joy in his. I don't think I have seen any portrait or photograph that conveys these eyes to me. Some make them flat and far apart: others give them a 'sleekit' appearance. They may have had these evil qualities—I don't know,—the charm of them dispelled all critical faculty. He had not dressed for the part, nor had he dressed away from it (his taste for the bizarre was gone, and the accusation of studied indifference, not to say intended discourtesy, in dress is unsupported); he came as he liked to be, in what the tailor would describe as a lounge-suit, soft neck-wear, and a jacket of velvet. A duty hung upon that jacket, for the author's use of that jacket was characteristic. He placed his two hands in the respective pockets, he took himself in charge, and gradually tightening his grip, appeared almost to reach breaking-point. He was *very* thin, and yet so full of life and energy! In the happiest vein himself, he spread happiness all round. He cared no more for his appearance than we cared for it. I remember his saying somewhere that he never resented any (however inaccurate) description of himself save that of the American reporter who said, 'Mr Stevenson had a tall willowy figure, surmounted by a classic head, from which issued a hacking cough.'

His speech was concerned, as may be imagined, with

Scotland, Scotsmen, and the Scottish Church. One story ran somewhat like this. In his youth he was in bed suffering a childish sickness, and all the visitors to the house were visitors to his room. Among these visitors was a relative who had come to Edinburgh to attend the General Assembly. The Church was then rent over the organ question, and Master Stevenson was opposed to the views of Dr Robert Lee (of Old Greyfriars). When the relative was taking leave, little Louis raised a menacing finger, and thus warned him: 'You are going to the General Assembly. Whatever you do, have nothing to do with that man Lee.'

It is the atmosphere and magnetism of Robert Louis Stevenson's speech that remain in the memory, when the contents have long been absorbed. He spoke to those simple preachers with as much carefulness of style and virility of thought as if he had been addressing a gathering of literati. He spoke as if he enjoyed it, and would do anything to make his audience happy. I felt then (and the feeling has been confirmed by every incident I read or hear of) that Stevenson possessed more than a genius for friendship; he had a good heart, whose goodness no evil fortune ever impaired. Perhaps that is the real source of such genius.

It was delightful in that place to hear a man speak with a good Scots accent. If he and I had met in the capital of Scotland we should have agreed that all Edinburgh men spoke the best of English without any accent at all. After a period of the cockney twang of New South Wales, I thought I detected symptoms of that drawl and turn which our enemies declare attend the man born in Edinburgh. It was none the less dear to me: the great author faded away: I heard the tones of a fellow-countryman, citizen with me of our own romantic town.

Through the friendship of the Rev. Dr Geikie, of Bathurst, a cousin of Sir Archibald and Professor James

Geikie, I was allowed to join Stevenson and a few others after lunch in a private room of the 'Australia.' I hope I took the modest part in the conversation that became a young man. 'I can remember' that he spoke with keen interest of his family and its history, and, as events showed, he was at that very time collecting material for his *Family of Engineers*, which he was writing, and was finding the distance from Scotland a drawback. He was pleased to find a worshipper and constant student in that far-off city, and with the attentive charm of a royal personage he was interested to hear how intimately certain passages in my personal history were bound up with a paper-covered edition (the first by Arrowsmith of Bristol) of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

We went our several ways. I saw him no more; but again I can remember how I got the news of his death, as it was passed almost from mouth to mouth in a Sydney suburban train. There was a distinct sense of personal loss, even in that pleasure-loving city, and among many who had never known him. It was not the way he thought to die: more tragic, more glorious perhaps. But nothing could lessen the grief of those who loved him, those who had basked even a short hour in the sunshine of his smile.

MEMORIES OF R. L. S.

ROBERT CATTON.

'I can remember Robert Louis Stevenson.' It was in 1889 that he first visited Honolulu and stayed here about six months, finishing *The Master of Ballantrae* and getting acquainted with King Kalakaua and many more of the residents, prominent and otherwise; but it was not till September 1893, on the occasion of his second visit, after the death of Kalakaua and the deposition of his sister, Liliuokalani, from the throne of Hawaii, that I got to know him. A mutual friend, the late Allen Herbert, brought him to my office one day, to meet 'a brither Scot', and afforded me an hour or more of exquisite enjoyment. His extreme physical delicacy was only too apparent at first sight, and evoked an emotion of pity, but that was all dissipated as soon as he began to talk. We talked of Edinburgh and of my native village, Aberdour, well known to Edinburgh people; we talked—he talked, I should say, about all sorts of things, but what seemed to be uppermost in his mind, at that time, in connection with Scotland, was the theory, exploded soon afterwards, about his being descended from Rob Roy Macgregor.* In this genealogical mood, he assumed that I was connected in some way with the great Clan Chattan, and professed to be disappointed when I told him my father was a Yorkshireman. He said he had known, or known of, one Catton before, an assistant to Professor Tait, at the University of Edinburgh, about the year 1867.

I got him to talk about his books a bit, which he did in the same unconventional way that he discussed other matters, and almost in the third person. I had then just read *The Beach of Falesa* for the first time, and, on my telling him how I had enjoyed it, he said, 'Yes, I never enjoyed reading anything more than that and the writing of it was capital fun.' I spoke of *David Balfour*, then being published in the *Weekly Scotsman*, and said I couldn't get the full benefit of it in that shape, which seemed to please him, for he said, 'It is but a poor book that one can be content to take in weekly numbers'

By-and-bye he asked if there wasn't somewhere we could go and 'have a drink'. That was easy! And on our way to The Royal Hawaiian Hotel we passed by the Palace Grounds, where something political was going on; those were the days of the

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* See R. L. S., letter quoted on p. 289.—[Ed.]

Provisional Government which intervened between the Monarchy and the Republic—later the Territory of Hawaii—and was termed, colloquially, by the 'man-in-the-street' the P.G. Government. I remarked, 'Those Royalists and P.G.'s remind me a good deal of Wiltshire and Case.' 'Yes,' he replied, 'especially Case.' Coming from Samoa where he had identified himself so closely with the natives, he was not in favour of annexation, by the United States, of these islands, and said he was afraid he would have to write about it. That would have been worth reading and I encouraged the idea, from the literary not the political point of view; but when I mentioned it again, he said he thought he had better stay with his Samoans and leave the Hawaiians alone, believing, apparently, that he had enough *aboriginal* work in hand at home.

The most interesting event of Stevenson's stay here, at that time, to his fellow-countrymen, was the talk he gave us at the Thistle Club. Meeting him on the street that day, I asked him what he was going to tell us in the evening; 'I have not the slightest idea,' was his reply. But when the time came he had no hesitation in announcing as his subject, 'That long drawn-out brawl entitled the History of Scotland,' and surely the 'brawlers,' Wallace, Bruce, Queen Mary, Prince Charlie, and many others, were never treated so ironically, all excepting John Knox, 'a name,' the speaker said, 'I should never presume to mention in a jocular manner.'

The peroration, of which I have a copy, was very fine: 'I received a book the other day called *The Stickit Minister* with a dedication to myself which affected me strangely, so that I could not read without a gulp. It was addressed to me in the third person, and bade me remember those places, "Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups are crying, his heart remembers how." Now when I think upon my latter end, as I do sometimes, especially of late years when it seems less imminent, I feel that when I shall come to die out here among these beautiful islands, I shall have lost something that had been my due, my native, predestinate and forfeited grave among honest Scots sods. And I feel that I shall never quite attain to what Patrick Walker calls my "resting grave," unless it were to be upon one of our purple hillsides, under one of those old, quaint, and half-obliterated table-tombstones, slantin' doon the brae, "Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups are crying, *my* heart remembers how."'

We made him Honorary Chieftain of the Thistle Club of Honolulu and gave him a silver thistle to wear, which he wore till the day of his death, and it was buried with him!*

That 'lecture' was delivered on the evening of Wednesday the 27th of September, and on the following Wednesday, I went to see the 'lecturer' at what was then the Hotel Sans Souci, and found him sitting up in bed, smoking a cigarette and reading a novel. 'What's matter, sick?' I asked. 'Yes,' he said, 'I have had a sharp spell of some confounded kind of fever and can't get about yet, so I'm trying to make the best of it here. It's a grand opportunity for reflection, but I need scarcely say that I don't do any reflecting at all.' During our half-hour's chat, I asked him if I couldn't lend him some books. He asked me what books I had, and selected Carlyle's Essays, which I sent him next day, and now I can turn to Carlyle's estimate of Voltaire's pecuniary condition in after-life which, 'by one means and another . . . raises his income from 800 francs a-year to more than centuple that sum,' and find the following R. L. S. note on the margin:—'80,000 £3200? I doubt ye, T. C.' In the Dr Francia essay, the author says, 'After all, brevity is the soul of wit! There is an endless merit in a man's knowing when to have done,' and so on throughout a short paragraph; R.L.S. says, 'Et Toi, O Tammas?' And further on, in the same chapter, some of the writer's theories are characterised as 'drivel.' I was showing those notes to a friend and his wife, one evening, when he turned to her and said: 'Just think of it, Grace! Carlyle's Voltaire annotated by Stevenson!'

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* See also pages 289–290.—[Ed.]

When her husband did not return to Samoa as he had intended, Mrs Stevenson came up to take care of him and effectively put her foot down on the proposal, to which he had good-naturedly assented, of repeating his 'lecture' on Scotland, or saying something else, to a larger audience. They sailed for Apia about the end of October 1893, after Stevenson had been some six weeks in Honolulu, and I never saw him again; her I got to be well acquainted with and among my most valued possessions are 'A Letter to Mr Stevenson's Friends, for private circulation', and a photograph of that tomb on the summit of Vaea, with these words written on the margin, 'Robert Catton, his friend and mine, with much affection from Fanny van de G. Stevenson.'

To my slight acquaintance with him whose initials R. L. S. are, according to Margaret Ogilvy's son, 'the best beloved in recent literature,' I am indebted, not only for the privilege of making this trifling contribution to his memory, but also for acquiring, as correspondents, several of his friends who knew him much better than I did. I shall mention only Alison Cunningham, who was as pleased to meet one who had known 'Lou' as I was delighted to know 'Cummy.' I have a 3 × 4 photograph of a group on the back of which she has written, 'Meant for me, photographer's wife & children. Of course it is just a snapshot'; and in most of her eight or ten letters that I have preserved, she refers to dogs—generally 'doggies', saying in one of them that they are 'The only friends that never grieve us till they leave us.'

I Can Remember having Dinner with Robert Louis Stevenson, in Honolulu, when I was Eight Years Old.

ANDREW A. CATTON.

IT was on a bright sunny afternoon in October 1893, that my mother picked me up, on my way home from school, and introduced me to the lady that she had with her in the little, old phaeton, whom she was taking down town on a shopping expedition:

'This is my boy, Andrew, Mrs Stevenson,' and 'Andrew, this is Mrs Robert Louis Stevenson; you've read *Treasure Island*, haven't you?'

'Yes.'

'Well, it was Mrs Stevenson's husband who wrote it.'

The shopping done, we took Mrs Stevenson to where she and her husband were staying at Waikiki, about four miles from the City proper, and that, in those days of mule-trams and one-horse buggies, was considered quite a distance. When we got there, mother telephoned to father to let him know where we were and that we had been asked to stay to dinner. She reported: 'Father says "all right," and that he will come for us later.'

'He's a sensible man,' said R. L. S.

I cannot recall any more of his sayings, but I remember thinking how funny it was that his hair should be so long, longer than his wife's. He was not very well then, and soon after dinner Mrs Stevenson said to him: 'Louis, it is past your bed-time, you had better say good-night,' which he did, and that seemed funny too, the idea of a real man having to go to bed so early, so much earlier than I, just a little boy, had to at home.

The next day father and I were talking about the Stevensons and the dinner I had had with them. 'You'll be proud of that some day, my boy,' he said, and when I asked him 'why?' he replied, 'Because Robert Louis Stevenson is going to be a very famous man.'

And father's words were true in both senses, as they so often are.

A RECOLLECTION.

ED TOWSE.

ONE thing R. L. S. liked about Honolulu was its informality. In his day at the Court of Kalakaua, and down to 1893, the town was absolutely indifferent in the matter of other people's affairs. This pleased him and he dressed as he liked and wandered widely. I met him very late one night at an unusual gathering near his quarters in Waikiki. A police captain had invited me to attend a raid on some gamblers and we drove to the beach. They were at it under a big tree with several lanterns. For a time we looked and listened. Then the officers closed in. A few of the card-players and dice-throwers escaped. A dozen or more were captured. Of course they all took it good-naturedly, and of course they all joined in the laughter of R. L. S., who had been a most interested spectator. The Hawaiians and Chinese all somehow knew him for a friend and were proud of the acquaintance.

SAMOA.

LLOYD OSBOURNE.

From the Introduction to the Vailima Edition.

IN a little family of three, leading an existence of extraordinary isolation, I assumed a disproportionate importance. Stevenson was in the position of a prisoner who makes friends with a mouse—and I was the mouse. I had, too, an understanding beyond my years;

or rather, I suppose, that in such a mental forcing-house a certain precocity was inevitable. He shared enthusiastically in all my games—tin soldiers, marbles, chess, drafts, and others even more interesting that he invented for our joint amusement—especially a mimic war-game that required hundreds of tin soldiers, the whole attic floor to play it on, and weeks of time. We were partners in my little printing-press; he wrote verses and engraved blocks for the miniature books I printed and sold; he painted scenery for my toy theatre and we gave performances with my mother as the only audience. All our spare time was passed together.

I commented on his work when he read it aloud, and was encouraged to criticise it. In general I thought it was beautifully written, but lacking in interest. I was always plaguing him to write something 'interesting,' and finally to please me he wrote *Treasure Island.*

. . . .

He liked too, best of all, I think—the beautiful and touchingly patriarchal aspect of family devotions; the gathering of the big, hushed household preparatory to the work of the day, and the feeling of unity and fellowship thus engendered. It was certainly a picturesque assembly—Stevenson in imposing state at the head of the table, I at his right with the Samoan Bible before me, ready to follow him with a chapter in the native language, the rest of the family about us, and in front the long row of half-naked Samoans, with their proud free air and glistening bodies. We were the *Sa Tusitalá*, the clan of Stevenson, and this was the daily enunciation of our solidarity.

. . . .

There is an unconscious pathos in Stevenson's fondness for his flageolet. He played it so badly, so haltingly, and, as his letters show, he was always poking fun at himself in regard to it. Certainly no one would get the impression that he was possessed of a very real love of music or that its deprivation left unanswered one of the most insistent appeals of his nature. Yet I believe that in a certain sense his whole life was starved in one of its essentials. This conviction has grown upon me by degrees, but I feel it strongly.

Looking back, I can recall how constantly he spoke of music. He would recur again and again to the dozen or so of operas he had heard in his youth, repeating the names of the singers—all of them German mediocrities—in a zest of recollection; and he would talk with the same warmth and eagerness of the few great instrumentalists he had heard in London concerts. And it was always, of course, with an air of finality, as of a man speaking of past and gone experiences that could never be repeated. He bought an extraordinary amount of printed music—Chopin, Grieg, Bach, Beethoven, Mozart—and would pore over it for hours at a time, trying here and there, and with endless repetitions, to elucidate it with his flageolet.*

It was amazing the amount of pleasure he got out of the effort. The doleful, whining little instrument was one of his most precious relaxations. He played it persistently, and even attempted to write compositions of his own for it. He studied counterpoint; he was constantly transposing, simplifying, and rearranging music to bring it within the scope of his trumpery 'pipe'; the most familiar sound in Vailima was that strange wailing and squeaking that floated down from his study. To us at the time it all seemed very amusing, and Stevenson laughed as heartily as any one at our raillery. But to me now it takes on a different aspect and my eyes are misty at the recollection.

At no time in his life had he ever had musical friends. All of them except Henley were positively indifferent to music. Yet some humble little professional pianist, violinist, or singer, had Stevenson been fortunate enough to have had such an acquaintance, would have gladdened and enriched his life beyond measure. If only, indeed, he might have known intimately some of his own great musical contemporaries—Jean or Edouard de Reszke, for instance—Sarasate or Paderewski! Instead, he had nothing but his pitiful flageolet and those great stocks of music with no key to unlock them. The longing was there, the hunger, but how poor was the satisfaction.

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* See p. 160 (2nd par.). Also *Letters of R. L. Stevenson*, vol. ii., pp. 281–2, 289–90.—[Ed.]

To-day when I see on every side those wonderful mechanical devices for the reproductions of vocal and instrumental music, I feel an almost unbearable regret that they have come too late for Stevenson. . . . What a difference, for instance, they would have made to Stevenson, and what a surpassing joy and solace they would have been to him.

But all he had was his little flageolet and the far-away memories of his youth.

. . . .

I remember on one occasion his looking up from the book he was reading, a copy of *Don Quixote*, and remarking with a sigh: 'That's what I am, Lloyd—just another Don Quixote!' His smile as he spoke was a little poignant, for the description was not without its sting. Intolerant of evil; almost absurdly chivalrous; passionately resentful of injustice; impulsive, headstrong, utterly scornful of conventions when they were at variance with what he considered right—his was a nature that was sure to be misjudged and as surely ridiculed by many. The Greathearts of the world have always seemed 'erratic', 'affected', and 'unbalanced' to the timid and envious souls who have jotted down these supposed deficiencies for posterity.

It is a pleasure to praise here Will Low's *Chronicle of Friendships*, in which, in my opinion, Stevenson is more illuminatingly revealed than in anything ever written of him. Here is the true Stevenson—the Stevenson I would fain have the reader know and take to his heart—boyish, gay, and of all things approachable to the poorest and shabbiest; a man bubbling over with talk and no less eager to listen; a man radiating human kindness and goodwill, in whom the gift of genius had not displaced the most winning, the most lovable of personal qualities.

STEVENSON AS I KNEW HIM IN SAMOA.

REV. A. E. CLAXTON.

From CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL, *October* 1922.

IT was my privilege to enjoy the friendship of R. L. S. from December 1889 till April 1892, when I left the Samoan Islands with my family for England. Stevenson arrived in Samoa on the 7th of December 1889, and came to lunch in my missionary home at Leulumoenga, eighteen miles from Apia, about a week later.

The town of Leulumoenga had been the headquarters of the opposition government of Tamasese and had been taken and burnt out by the Malietoa army not long before. When I took my guest to the boundary wall of my garden and pointed out to him a large native house on the other side of the wall, he said: 'This looks like something official, why wasn't this one also burnt?'

I shall never forget the astonishment on his face and in his voice when I told him that the house was the *Fale Fono* (Parliament House) of the Tamasese party and that it had been spared because the Malietoans would not endanger the mission bungalow, which, being so near, and having a thatch roof, might have caught fire if they had set fire to the *Fale Fono*. 'Is it possible they could under such circumstances be so considerate?' was his exclamation. 'How very remarkable! How convinced both parties must have been of the inflexible neutrality of missionaries, since you must have had daily dealings with the rebels all around you and were living almost under the shadow of the rebel headquarters.'

Surprise followed surprise as instances were mentioned, such as the rendering of surgical aid to the wounded of both parties and the continuance of schools and classes. I told him that both sides in the civil war observed Sunday by a truce every Saturday night, and not only refrained from fighting on Sundays, but asked us to send preachers into their respective camps to hold services and to preach. It had never entered into his imagination that among a people reputed to be half-savage such a relation of trust and loyalty, not only between Mission and People, but also between hot combatants, could have been possible. No wonder it is unbelievable by the general mass of mankind, when a man of Stevenson's vivid imagination and quickness of apprehension could be so astonished. It was such revelations as the above that led him to write later: 'I went there (to the South Sea Islands) with a great prejudice against missions, but that prejudice was soon annihilated. . . . The missionary is a great and beneficent factor.'

Stevenson alarmed my family very much by exhibitions of restless activity when we returned to the bungalow veranda. He could not be induced to sit for more than a few minutes at a time. He preferred to keep moving. I was on tenter-hooks of apprehension lest he should presently need to be picked up out of the flower-beds which bordered the railless veranda. He literally pranced about as he talked rapidly and fascinatingly on all sorts of subjects. In the middle of some absorbing topic, to which we were listening spellbound, he suddenly called across to me: 'Claxton, can you lend me a razor? I haven't had a shave to-day.' I said, 'Come along inside, I'll soon find one, and will have hot water in a few moments.' 'Oh thanks, I don't need hot water if your razor has any kind of an edge to it; and I'll manage it out here.' So he dry-shaved as he pranced and talked, and, to our great relief, without accidents.

Early in 1890 I was transferred from Leulumoenga to Apia and came into closer touch with Stevenson. One of my duties at Apia was to originate and edit a periodical in the Samoan language which was called *O le Sulu Samoa.* This periodical was to contain,—besides very full lesson helps for Sunday School teachers,—special articles, general information and news. Mr Newell (then our Senior missionary), at my suggestion, sounded R. L. S. as to his willingness to let me translate and publish one of his short stories in the *Sulu.* To this he agreed, and *The Bottle Imp* was the one selected. That is how it came to pass that this story was read in nearly every home in Samoa before it was published in English. By mutual agreement, Stevenson and I spent an evening together each month, going over each chapter before it was printed, and discussing my translation. He was rapidly picking up a knowledge of the Samoan language and he seemed to enjoy the balancing of rival expressions in the Samoan idiom. If we were prevented from meeting to talk it over, correspondence passed between us concerning the next monthly chapter. Unfortunately most of this correspondence has been lost by shipwreck in the rapids of the Yangtze River in China. The story was at once very popular with the Samoans, and it led to a great increase in the circulation of the *Sulu.* Stevenson said to me one day: 'I sometimes almost wish I had not agreed to the printing of *The Bottle Imp* in your paper, for I get such a lot of Samoan visitors who stay a long time keeping me from my work, and when I am obliged to excuse myself they shyly ask if they might just have a peep at the Imp himself before they go away. They think I keep him in my safe.'

When a reprint of the story in Samoan was called for a few years later, Mr Newell, who succeeded me in the editorship of the *Sulu*, could only lay his hand upon a single copy.

Another of my duties at Apia was the charge for a time of the English Services in the Church for white residents. Stevenson attended occasionally. I remember meeting him one Monday morning in the town, when he greeted me with these words: 'I say, Claxton, that's a hot shop, that Kirk of yours; you nearly broiled me last night.' I asked him if he was alluding to the physical temperature, or was it my theology that made him so hot. He replied: 'No, I don't think it was the theology that made me say that; I really meant the physical heat.' The Church had then an iron roof which did not get properly cool till about midnight. 'But,' he went on, 'since you ask me concerning the doctrine, I must say that you stirred me up when you said that a man should realise that he is accountable to God all the time, even when he has put his slippers on at the end of his day's work.'

A day or two later he wrote further on the matter. That letter has been lost; but in a subsequent note, which is still in my possession, he said:—

> 'I am sorry I wrote you so hurriedly the other day. I knew after I had begun I should leave a false impression—that your sermon had really something to do with my heat; but I was too deeply engaged to begin again, and let it go. I do not know why you should care: but I had no fault to find. Only the strong statement—how shall I say?—wearied me. I once wrote, long ago, something like this: "I know there is no discharge in this war, but shall there be no furlough?" And your expression seemed to blot all furloughs out; and, believe me, I understood not only the sense in which it was true, but (what is more to the purpose) the sense in which it would be needful for some among your hearers—perhaps even . . . for . . . the immaculate R. L. S.'

Stevenson's sympathetic help was always to be relied on. When the little iron Church was replaced by a better building he heartily sent me a donation and attended the opening Services of the first instalment of the new building—a new Chancel. At the close, with characteristic kindliness, he waited to congratulate me on the brightness and suitability of the Service, and especially on the 'artistic unity of the *mise en scene*.'

If religion could have been always and only artistic he would have been religious always, but he deplored the marring, and often the destruction, of 'the artistic or æsthetic unity' by puritanic doctrine. That is why I think he used to argue so fervently for the revival of Samoan dances, which the earlier, mostly Scottish, missionaries had sternly discouraged. 'Ethical principles,' he would say, 'are excellent sometimes, but they are oftener irrelevant. They must not be introduced unless the artistic unity demands them. Under any other circumstances they are an unwarrantable intrusion.' It might be interesting to discuss the religion of R. L. S., but that has been very brilliantly done by Dr John Kelman in his *The Faith of Robert Louis Stevenson*, and the limits set for these 'Recollections' are prohibitive.

Stevenson was a racy raconteur, a delightful and fascinating conversationalist, especially when with a few chosen and kindred spirits, and if given a free hand and an occasional lead; but while he could think best with pen in hand, and even speak brilliantly to a small circle of sympathetic hearers, it was a real torture to him to speak to the general public. He once, as he said, 'in a weak moment,' agreed to give a lecture in the Apia English Church. He repented but once, and that was for ever after. To himself his effort proved a terrible trial, but to himself only, for his lecture was a treat to his friends. I was put into the Chair and had to introduce him, and I did my best to put him and his audience, about eighty persons of many nationalities, *en rapport*. He had copious notes, almost a manuscript, but that was a matter to deplore. If he had trusted to his great gift as a raconteur and had left his notes at home, he too would have enjoyed it.

I like to recall the day when I went to Vailima to say good-bye to him before leaving Samoa, whose climate had proved too enervating for my wife, and had necessitated my returning with her to England in April 1892. At the moment of saying farewell he followed me to the steps which led down from the veranda, and then a very kindly thought came to him. He said, 'Will you be going to Edinburgh?' I said I hoped it might be possible, for I had never had the privilege. He then went indoors again, and presently came back with a very friendly letter of introduction to Mr Charles Baxter, in which he asked his old friend to do anything he possibly could to enable me to see the best of Edinburgh. To my great regret I did not get to Edinburgh, and did not therefore see Mr Baxter.

Being in Sydney a year later, at the time when Stevenson's deportation from Samoa was under consideration, because he persisted in supporting the Mataafa faction against Malietoa and the three Treaty Powers, I received an invitation to breakfast with Sir John Thurston, then Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner for the Pacific. A whole morning was spent answering questions and explaining the situation. I was able to assure the High Commissioner that Stevenson was not urging Mataafa towards armed resistance (though some others were), but that, to the best of my belief, R. L. S. was striving to secure some fitting position for Mataafa within the government of Malietoa, which was recognised by America, Britain, and Germany.

In this endeavour Stevenson found his greatest difficulty lay in persuading Mataafa. Sir John finally said that what he had ascertained from me had confirmed him in his opinion that it would be a mistake to deport Stevenson.

Stevenson's choice of Samoa to settle in after several years of wandering among the islands was characteristic. Mountain ranges, sunny clime, luxuriant tropical vegetation, a delightful race with gentle and courtly manners in times of peace and savage daring in war, a race on the borderland between savagery and Western culture, and history in the crucible ready for the making, all appealed to him. Nothing that happened escaped his notice or failed to enlist his ardent interest. His impressionable, artistic temperament lent itself to every influence. He had a rare power of being all things to all men.

To the obvious attractions of the artistic and psychological kinds another and very strong attraction was a potent factor. Samoa was now the meeting-place of three Western nations with a primitive child-race just becoming self-conscious. The situation held prospects of lively situations and perhaps a unique and happy sequel. The situation, to a man of Stevenson's gifts, was pregnant with possibilities. I gathered from many talks I had with him that behind all the other attractions mentioned, which were only subsidiary, there lay deep in his heart another attraction and another motive, the desire to complete the artistic unity of the scene by the creation of a new and visible Utopia in that virgin soil.

He congratulated himself on being an 'exile', as his friends called him. He pitied, not ironically, but quite sincerely, those friends who were in bondage to the conventionalities of Edinburgh and London and Paris, because, to his many-sided mentality, life in these cities was tame by comparison.*

One cannot help thinking that the depression of the last months of his life was largely caused by the growing conviction that the day was drawing near when Germany would get her own way and would ere long have undisputed right to work her own will in the most important and larger half of the Samoan archipelago.

Some of us deplored, as did Sir Sidney Colvin, that Stevenson allowed himself to be drawn into the whirlpool of local politics. He exhausted himself by partisanship. Had he taken up an attitude of greater detachment and impartiality he would probably have prolonged his life, and would assuredly have added to his already-won laurels as 'the first of living stylists.'

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* See pp. 264, 265.—[Ed.]

I CAN REMEMBER ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

A. SAFRONI-MIDDLETON.

WHO, once having met Robert Louis Stevenson in the last years of his life in Samoa, could not remember him? A dull brain, if his æsthetic sun tanned face did not survive as a beacon to awaken the memory of days when he stood amongst the crowd of sailormen and traders in the bars of old Apia. It would be nearer the truth to say that R. L. S., hail-fellow-well-met with all who chanced his way, met me—not I him! He dubbed Samoa 'The Half-way Inn of the Pacific'; and it was his secret delight to mingle with the strange characters who came in on the schooners, men from Nowhere—and bound for Nowhere! I was a lad at the time, and it was my violin-playing that attracted R. L. S.'s attention to myself. Most of all I recall his almost boyish delight when the Homeric leg-puller from bluffland, just in from the Pacific wine-dark seas, told his splendid yarns. 'Well now!—seems impossible,' the author of *Treasure Island* would ejaculate. And only the close observer could detect the twinkle in his eyes when he banged his old peaked cap on his leg, and inspired the long-pull from the bar as well as from the nerveless narrator of the wide and wonderful.

But it was when amongst the Samoan children that one gained an insight into the true Stevenson. On one occasion, when I was engaged as first violin in the

German orchestra at a native festive dance, R. L. S. arrived on the scene. His interest seemed to be all for the weird Samoan music with its ear-haunting minor strains. After the dance my friend and I came across a group of children who were sitting by a lagoon near Safata, by moonlight. In their midst, arrayed in duck suit and hatless, sat the Poet-author, listening in wrapt attention to pretty Nina's creation-myth, a story that told how the gods sent the first cocoa-nut trees to Samoa from shadowland. So intent was R. L. S. as he jotted down notes in his pocket-book and encouraged the children to speak, that he did not notice our approach. 'Beautiful!—incredible!' was his enthusiastic comment when the native maid finished her tale, adding to my friend McNab, 'Unbelievable! Why, man, our folk across the sea would say we exaggerated were we to write down the true poetry poured out of the mouths of these sun-tinted children.' It was evident that he was deeply impressed by the beauty of the legends. 'As poetic and refined in sentiment as they are handsome in form and feature,' he remarked, as he beat the jungle bush with his stick and we plunged into the scrub that separated him from his home, Vailima.

SIR BERRY CUSACK-SMITH, BART., K.C.M.G.

Extract from Note.

I only knew Robert Louis Stevenson in Samoa, and my outstanding memory of him is of a man who fought every day to prevent serious ill-health from preventing his enjoying life. All his work while in Samoa was done in the face of constant illness; but he got every ounce of satisfaction that could be got out of the wonderful scenery and climate of the South Seas. I very seldom saw him without a smiling face and without receiving a very cheery greeting, though he felt things in which he was interested very deeply, such as the capture of the rebel chief Mataafa, whom he had befriended for a long time. I remember, on returning to the Consulate after a very long day on board a British warship, after having successfully captured the rebel, that Robert Louis Stevenson in a state of great distress pleaded with me for Mataafa's life.

I was able to assure him that the British Government had no intention of doing any harm to the rebel chief, beyond being absolutely determined to put an end to the mischief which had been going on. . . .

A Reminiscence.

J. C. THIERSENS.

I met the late Robert Louis Stevenson once only, and that was when I was travelling from San Francisco to New Zealand on the steamship *Mariposa* in October 1893. We called at Honolulu, and amongst the passengers who joined our steamer at that port were R. L. S., his wife and his step-daughter, who were bound for Samoa.

My recollection is that they were somewhat reserved and did not converse much with other passengers. R. L. S., however, seemed to be very fond of chess and I remember he played constantly with Dr Findlay of Wellington, N.Z.

R. L. S. did not seem to trouble much about his outward appearance, indeed he struck one as being 'artistically grubby.' During the week he was on board he wore the same clothes, namely, a dingy flannel shirt, an aged brown velvet coat, and his trousers and shoes had evidently seen better days.

After a week's run from Honolulu we arrived at Apia in Samoa, and the natives at once came off to the steamer bringing with them large wreaths of tropical flowers, which they hung around the necks of R. L. S., his wife and step-daughter.

Soon afterwards the Stevensons left the steamer for their house, which was situated on the hill.

I believe I am right in thinking that the Samoan natives were very fond of R. L. S. and would have done almost anything for him.

Our steamer left for New Zealand that night and I never met R. L. S. again.

A VISIT TO ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

S. R. LYSAGHT.

Reprinted from a Letter to the Editor of THE TIMES, *Dec.* 4, 1919.

HAVING, as a traveller from West to East, lost a certain number of minutes daily for some months, and found these again accumulated and restored to me in the addition of a new day to my calendar, it happened that it was Easter Sunday in 1894 on board a little steamer bound from the Friendly Islands to Samoa on the morning before we arrived at Apia, and it was also Easter Sunday next morning when we landed. The minutes of the days lost on the journey from England had not been missed; the day gained, that second Easter Sunday, is one of the most memorable of my life, for it introduced me to Robert Louis Stevenson.

A deep blue sea, a coral shore fringed with palm trees, and, beyond it, mountains covered to the summits in tangled forest is the first impression you get of the island. Further acquaintance hardly changes it; the skies seem always blue, the seas always calm, in the forest there is always silence, in the distance a lonely sound of water breaking on the coral reef—'A land in which it seemed always afternoon.' You might think that no man who had lived here for any length of time could escape its influence, that possibly a poet might write something like the *Lotus Eaters* here, probably write nothing at all, but that he could not produce work to stir the pulses of men and kindle their heroic instincts. Until you had met and spoken with Stevenson: then you realised how little dependent a man of genius is on his surroundings, how much more he has to give from within himself than to receive from without. From the road that led up through the tropical forest I passed through the gate of Vailima into the north country. I had been drifting among the islands, receiving idle impressions, desiring neither to think nor to act and meeting no one who did either; and an hour after finding myself in Stevenson's company I was in a world of movement and activity, of brave effort and stimulating ideas. The silence of the forests enfolded us, the great blue ring of untroubled ocean lay beyond them, and the hush of the waters on the reef reached our ears, but now the atmosphere seemed rather that of bracing north-eastern coasts and of morning on the hills of heather.

Something, perhaps, of the welcome I received from Stevenson was due to my privilege of bearing a letter of introduction to him from the man whose work he ranked higher than that of any living author. Anyone sent to him by Mr George Meredith would have been sure of kindness, but such kindness as I received was more than vicarious; it was, as others have found it, spontaneous and complete, the outcome of a nature that neither knew half-heartedness nor understood the meaning of condescension. As I was one of the last of his British visitors and saw him some years later than most of the friends at home who keep a loving memory of his appearance in their hearts, it may be interesting to give a sketch, however rough, of the man as he impressed me. The first thing that struck me was his bearing. He was so slender that he looked taller than he really was; he was barefooted and walked with a long and curiously marked step, light but almost metrical, in accord, it seemed, with some movement of his mind. It was his constant habit to pace to and fro as he conversed, and his step and speech seemed in harmony. He spoke always deliberately, if not slowly, but he never halted or hesitated; the fitting word was as ready to his tongue as to his pen—perhaps more ready, for we know the pains which he took in seeking it in his writing. He did not stoop, but in walking his body was somewhat inclined forward, and in his attitude generally there was something unusual, distinguished, almost fantastic. His bearing remains in my memory as unlike that of any other human being I ever saw, and only less noteworthy than his eyes. His face was illumined by his eyes: it was his eyes you saw first, his eyes you remembered. Regarded separately, you might notice in his jaw and chin, especially when seen in profile, contours of rude, almost aggressive strength; in the lines about his mouth an expression which suggested exceptional power of scorn or sarcasm rather than that kindness in judgment and generous affection which were most characteristic of him in his attitude to his fellow men. But his eyes transfigured his face, and in their light its hardest lines grew attractive. You may see them in his many photographs, wide apart, alert as at times when he was listening attentively, but not as when they brightened at a memory, nor as when they flashed with indignation, nor as when the smile forerunning a humorous thought was dawning in them.

I had expected after all I had heard of his ill-health to find a pale, delicate-looking man, and his photographs had led me to picture one with long hair worn somewhat after the fashion in which popular fancy adorns a bard; but in both preconceptions I was wrong. His skin was of a ruddy tinge, his face had a look of health, in spite of thinness, and his hair was cut short and brushed in a very ordinary fashion. Of all the photographs I have seen of him, that taken at Sydney in 1892 and reproduced as a frontispiece to the *Vailima Letters* (the Edinburgh edition reproduction is better than the etching in the first edition) is most in accord with the impression I got of him when I saw him in that last year of his life.

Of the life in Samoa there is abundant record in the *Vailima Letters*, and I could add little that would be of value. There is much of interest in the island, but its chief attraction was conferred by Stevenson's presence, and what little I have to relate must be of himself. His immediate surroundings struck me as being essentially happy, affection and cheerfulness reigned in his home, the true spirit of comradeship was found there, 'the true word of welcome was spoken in the door.' This atmosphere of fellowship extended beyond the inner family circle; the strong clan instinct which survived in the master of the house found a response in the sentiments of the natives; his servants, all men, sixteen in number at the time of my visit, were as members of one family, jealous for its honour, as ready to fight as to cook or dig on its behalf; and his influence had gradually extended far outside the limits of his household and gave him a position something akin to that of the chief of a clan in his part of the island. Of this I heard much and saw something; for while I was staying in the house there were constant visits, sometimes from parties of natives, sometimes from chiefs of the surrounding districts, seeking his advice and ready to obey his counsel in connexion with the political troubles of which he has spoken so fully in *The Footnote to History* and the letters to *The Times*. These visitors would be received with ceremony, for he never failed to observe the traditional native customs, and, before parting, the Khava would be mixed and served with solemn rites. I believe he was proud of the position of authority he had won, without effort, by mere force of character and sympathy, and that the responsibilities which it brought upon him added much to the interest of his life in the island. At the time of my visit there was a little war going on. Tamasésé, who represented the native party hostile to the German influence, was in rebellion, and the woods about Vailima were full of native warriors. Eight of the servants were away fighting, some few heads had been taken, and the ladies (Mrs Stevenson and Mrs Strong) had been sent down to Apia for their better safety. Their hospitality, however, was great and their fear small, for they made the presence of a guest a sufficient reason for their return. There are no doors at Vailima, curtains only divide the lower rooms from the verandah; and before retiring on the night of my revival I asked Stevenson whether, as the woods were full of armed men, some of them perhaps enemies of the house, it would be well to have my revolver loaded in case of surprise. He laughed at the idea and said it was an unknown thing in the annals of the island for attack to be made upon sleepers—that, indeed, the native rules of war are more like those which governed old tournaments than modern battles, each side being allowed the fullest opportunity for preparation, and a notification being sent from one side to the other before a battle naming the hour proposed for the attack.

I remember waking at six o'clock next morning and finding Tusitala, as Stevenson was always called, standing at my bedside. Having congratulated me on my escape from assassination during the night, and spoken after the manner of the earlier riser on the beautiful hours of morning already wasted in bed, he conducted me across the enclosure of cleared forest west of the house and showed me the bathing place, a deep pool in the stream which flowed under Vaea Mountain. He explained to me that it was after the three streams which met hard by that the estate was named, but that the word for 'three waters' not being euphonious, 'Vailima,' which means 'four waters,' had been substituted, a poetic licence which he thought permissible. After my experience of the heat of the previous day the extreme cold of the water was a surprise, and at that time in the morning the air was so fresh and invigorating that it was difficult to believe that you were in the tropics; indeed, for Stevenson the cold of the stream was too severe, and he had to be content with a tub indoors. After bathing the subsequent order of the day was as follows:—We breakfasted at seven, clothed in flannels and barefooted, for no one at Vailima wore shoes until dinner time. After breakfast I believe Stevenson was in the habit of working up to lunch time; but for the week I was with him he almost entirely abandoned work, and no one was sorry for this, for he had been working over hard, and rest and conversation with one who knew many of his old friends did him good. I was, indeed, a gainer by his abstention, for I had for long hours daily the most wonderful of comrades: his spirits never flagged, his talk was always inspiriting, his point of view always original. There was nothing of the invalid, no suggestion of failing strength about him; he had a zest for life, he 'cherished it in every fibre'; there was a gift of *light* in him which seemed to radiate and make every topic he touched bright.

During these conversations he talked often of home and old friends, much of literature and of his own work, especially *Weir of Hermiston.* I can see him now sitting on the side of his camp-bed in the little room in which he did most of his work and reading to me the first chapters of that great book; I can hear the tone of his voice and see the changing expression of his face as he read, for he was in love with the work, happier in it, perhaps, than in anything he had ever done, and his reading showed his interest. He had no more false modesty in praising his own work when it pleased him than contempt in condemning it when he disapproved. 'Now, isn't that confoundedly good?' he said to me after finishing one of the chapters in *Weir.* He expressed to me, as I believe he wrote to Sir Sidney Colvin, his opinion that in this story he had touched his high-water mark; he told me something of its outline, and as in one, and that an important, point, it differed from the notes furnished by Mrs Strong, it will be heard with interest. The strongest scene in the book, he said — the strongest scene he had ever conceived or would ever write—was one in which the younger Kirstie came to her lover when he was in prison and confessed to him that she was with child by the man he had murdered. His eyes flashed with emotion as he spoke about it, and I cannot think that he had abandoned this climax. It is a climax, too, which would seem to be much more in harmony with the genius and conception of the story and characters than the ending sketched in the notes, which was no doubt an alternative with which he coquetted.

The other reading which I remember with greatest pleasure was of poems afterwards published among the *Songs of Travel.* We had had much discussion about rhythm, especially as to a tendency towards subtler and less regular rhythmical effects. He was disposed to think that in English verse the career of the regular and well-marked metres was almost complete, and that the poetry of the future would find expression in more complex harmonies. He cited the work of Mr W. B. Yeats (whose poem 'The Lake Isle of Innesfree' was then a notable instance of the case in point) as an achievement in this direction, and he admitted that he had been attempting to tread the same path in some of his own later verse. Such were the second of the poems entitled 'Youth and Love,' 'To the heart of youth the world is a high way side'—and that beginning 'In the highlands in the country places,' and perhaps also that most beautiful of all his poems, 'Home no more home to me,' where the music depends no less on the actual rhythm than the right emphasis and sympathetic pause. Indeed, I believe that if I had not heard him read it I should have missed much of its rhythmical beauty. His aim was towards a greater subtlety of rhythm, a very different thing from the abandonment of metrical restriction which marks so many horrible productions in *vers libre*.

In a conversation on his own writings I alluded, perhaps injudiciously, to a fear expressed by George Meredith that his banishment from the great world of men, his inability to keep in close touch with the social development of the time, might be a disadvantage to his work. He showed in reply an unexpected warmth which suggested that he really felt the burden of his exile but refused to admit it. 'It is all the better for a man's work if he wants it to be good and not merely popular,' he said, 'to be removed from these London influences. Human nature is always the same, and you see and understand it better when you are standing outside the crowd.' Meredith thought otherwise, and defended his contention on hearing from me of Stevenson's comment. 'Human nature is not always the same,' he replied. 'The same forces may be always at work, but they find different expression in every generation, and it is the expression that chiefly concerns the writer of fiction.' It is an interesting subject for reflection, the more so that it produced such a divergence of opinion between two of the most distinguished writers of our time.

At the time of Stevenson's death I read some reports in the papers that he had grown despondent latterly about his own work, and believed that he was losing ground with his public. I believe these to have had no foundation. It struck me from all he said that he believed his best work was yet within him and that he was only beginning to get it outside him in *Weir of Hermiston.* Nor was there the slightest trace of despondency in his tone either in reference to his work or his circumstances. The nearest approach to regret in anything he said about his work was a remark to the effect that he had fewer inspirations than when he was a younger man; but he suggested that he knew better how to entertain the inspirations when they came. And as to his surroundings he was undoubtedly not discontented. His banishment from his friends at home was, of course, keenly felt; but he knew that it was inevitable and made the best of it, alluding rather to those expressions of old affection and new sympathy which every mail brought him from home than to the deprivations of his exile. The hope of seeing many of his friends as his guests at Vailima in the future was also constantly with him, and he never tired of speaking of old days and old friends; of Edinburgh, of the British Museum, of the Savile Club, of Box Hill, most frequently.

Much of our time was passed in conversation and reading, remaining indoors or on the verandah during the hotter hours of the day, and once or twice, when it grew cooler, walking or riding down to Apia. His appearance on horseback was amusing—dressed in white, with riding boots and a French peaked cap, chivalrous in his bearing, but mounted on a horse which would not have been owned by any self-respecting English costermonger, he almost suggested a South Sea Don Quixote. But in spite of appearances his horse was not an unserviceable beast, and perhaps few better could be found on the island. At dinner in the evening, when all the household was assembled, Mrs Stevenson and Mrs Strong, Lloyd Osbourne and Count Wurmbrand, a charming and cultivated Austrian soldier acting at the time as chief cowherd on the Stevenson farm, with the addition, on one or two occasions, of M. de Lautreppe, a French naturalist on a visit to the island, a delightful companion, we were a merry and odd-looking party. The evening dress of the island is of white drill for men, and generally white of some other material for ladies, but there is no very strict insistence on detail. But one rule was recognised by all of us, and that was the wearing of shoes and socks which had been dispensed with during the day.

Stevenson's costumes were remarkable, and it struck me that, though quite free from vanity, he found a curious pleasure in dressing, or as children say, 'in dressing up.' On one evening at dinner I remember he wore an Indian costume, an embroidered thing folded and crossed upon his chest. The dinner itself was always excellent, abounding in strange dishes of the Island, chiefly vegetable, and, in spite of the absence at the war of the head cook, admirably served. And the wine was a surprise: one does not expect to find good wine in the South Sea Islands, but here was of the best. Stevenson's artistic tastes and instincts included wine, and the Burgundy laid down in the Vailima cellar was worthy of its destination. Tusitala had not only the art of conversation but the art of making others talk their best and of establishing general conversation; and, with Mrs Stevenson, herself one of the most brilliant of talkers, also present, the guests who did not find good cheer at table deserved to spend the rest of their lives in solitude and fasting. The music which followed dinner was perhaps the worst ever heard; it was not native music, which is beautiful, but was produced by Count Wurmbrand and myself. Every evening the Count sang the 'Cruiskeen Lawn,' which he had learnt in broken Irish at Vailima and sang to a tune of his own, and I played, with improprieties which were hardly noticed, so much out of tune was the piano, Scottish and Irish reels and jigs. Then arose Tusitala and, placing Teuila (Mrs Strong) opposite to him, danced on the polished floor with a vigour seldom matched and a delight splendid to see.

It was usually between eleven and twelve o'clock before we went to bed, and as we never rose later than six in the morning the day must have been a long one, though it did not seem so at the time. My host was in the habit of conducting me to my room each night, for he was punctual in the observation of courtesies, and on our way thither we generally lingered on the verandah. Out over the great plain of the Pacific was a sky of such starlight as we do not see at home; the tropical forest all about us was profoundly silent, and from far away came the unvarying sound of the waters breaking on the coral reefs. He revelled in the beauty of the scene, but he admitted that he would gladly have exchanged it for the mist-enfolded coasts of the little islands he had left far away in the wintry seas.

My stay with him was too short: it would have been longer if I had known that I was not to see him again, and it was my own fault that it was not prolonged; but in one week he allowed me to know him intimately, and he was one of those whom to know is to love.* He had the power of winning affection as well as admiration by his writings from people who had never met him, and all that personal charm which shines through his work was found in a more marked degree in himself. It is difficult to write of him critically or without enthusiasm. He seemed to me to be the most inspiring comrade that ever put hope into his fellows, the most courteous gentleman that ever conferred a favour while seeming to ask one, and the most heroic spirit that ever fought and fought to win with a good heart against desperate odds.

THE GIFT OF A BIRTHDAY.

MRS BOURKE COCKRAN.

MY friendship with Robert Louis Stevenson began before I actually met him. My father, who was the American Land Commissioner in Samoa in 1891, went out to the Islands without his family. An intimacy soon sprang up between him and the great writer. One day he happened to mention to Mr Stevenson that one of his daughters was born on Christmas Day, and had felt seriously the loss of a separate birthday. Mr Stevenson instantly responded, with the quick sympathy and whimsical turn of mind so characteristic of him, that he himself had a birthday which had become rather timeworn and which he had long since ceased to value. He would, therefore, gladly present it to the little girl born on Christmas Day. I was that little girl. Proceeding to give effect to this impulse he drew up what he called a deed of gift assigning the birthday to me. Here is a copy of it:—

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* '. . . I find myself telling myself, "O, I must tell this to Lysaght," or, "This will interest him," in a manner very unusual after so brief an acquaintance.' (From a letter of R. L. S.'s to George Meredith, April 17th, 1894.)—[ED.]

I, Robert Louis Stevenson, Advocate of the Scots Bar, author of *The Master of Ballantrae* and *Moral Emblems*, stuck civil engineer, sole owner and patentee of the Palace and Plantation known as Vailima in the island of Upolu, Samoa, a British Subject, being in sound mind, and pretty well, thank you, in body:

In consideration that Miss Annie H. Ide, daughter of H. C. Ide in the county of Caledonia, in the state of Vermont, United States of America, was born out of all reason upon Christmas Day, is therefore out of all justice denied the consolation and profit of a proper birthday:

And considering that I, the said Robert Louis Stevenson, have attained an age when O we never mention it, and that I have now no further use for a birthday of any description:

And in consideration that I have met H. C. Ide, the father of the said Annie H. Ide, and found him about as white a land-commissioner as I require:

Have transferred and do hereby transfer, to the said Annie H. Ide, all and whole my rights and privileges in the thirteenth day of November, formerly my birthday, now, hereby and henceforth, the birthday of the said Annie H. Ide to have, hold, exercise, and enjoy the same in the customary manner, by the sporting of fine raiment, eating of rich meats, and receipt of gifts, compliments and copies of verse, according to the manner of our ancestors:

And direct the said Annie H. Ide to add to the said name of Annie H. Ide the name of Louisa, at least in private, and I charge her to use my said birthday with moderation and humanity, *et tanquam bona filia familiæ*, the said birthday not being so young as it once was, and having carried me in a very satisfactory manner since I can remember:

And in the case the said Annie H. Ide shall neglect or contravene either of the above conditions I hereby revoke the donation and transfer my rights in the said birthday to the President of the United States of America for the time being.

In witness thereof I have hereto set my hand and seal this nineteenth day of June in the year of grace eighteen hundred and ninety-one. ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Witness—LLOYD OSBOURNE.
Witness—HAROLD WATTS.

Seal.

This was duly sent to me by mail, and my answer acknowledging it evoked the following letter in response:—

To Miss Anne Ide.

VAILIMA SAMOA.
November 1891.

MY DEAR LOUISA,—Your picture of the church the photograph of yourself and your sister and your very witty and pleasing letter came all in a bundle and made me feel I had my money's worth for that birthday. I am now, I must be, one of your nearest relatives; exactly what we are to each other I do not know, I doubt if the case has ever happened before—your papa ought to know, and I don't believe he does; but I think I ought to call you in the meanwhile and until we get the advice of counsel learned in the law my name-daughter.

Well, I was extremely pleased to see by the church that my name-daughter could draw; by the letter, that she was no fool; and by the photograph that she was a pretty girl, which hurts nothing. See how virtues are rewarded! My first idea of adopting you was entirely charitable; and here I find that I am quite proud of it, and of you, and that I chose just the kind of name-daughter I wanted, for I can draw too, or rather I mean to say that I could before I forgot how; and I am very far from being a fool myself, however much I may look it; and I am as beautiful as the day, or at least I once hoped that perhaps I might be going to be. And so I might. So you see we are well met, and peers on these important points. I am very glad also that you are older than your sister. So should I have been if I had had one. So that the number of points and virtues which you inherited from your name-father is already quite surprising.

You are quite wrong as to the effect of the birthday on your age. From the moment the deed was registered (as it was in the public press with every solemnity) the thirteenth of November became your own and only birthday and you ceased to have been born on Christmas Day. Ask your father: I am sure he will tell you this is sound law. You are thus become a month and twelve days younger than you were, but will go on growing older for the future in the regular and human manner from one thirteenth of November to the next. The effect on me is more doubtful; I may as you suggest live for ever, I might on the other hand come to pieces like the one horse shay at a moment's notice: doubtless the step is risky but I do not the least regret that which enables me to sign myself your revered and delighted name-father. ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

The first celebration of the birthday thus given me, on the next thirteenth of November, was made memorable because Mr Stevenson sent me a Samoan painting made by Mrs Stevenson's son-in-law, Joe Strong, and also an autograph poem which he called a Nursery Jingle.

Within the following year it was fated that I should meet the donor of the birthday.

My father, having returned to the United States in 1892, was appointed the following year Chief Justice of Samoa (under the three-power treaty between Germany, Britain, and the United States). On this occasion he took his three young daughters with him. In San Francisco we learned that Mr and Mrs Stevenson were then in Honolulu, and would return to the Islands on our steamer *The Mariposa.*

As the time drew near for actually meeting the hero of my childish dreams, I was in a panic of shyness and apprehension. The great moment finally arrived, however, and I received the warmest possible greeting from both Mr and Mrs Stevenson. I was still too terrified to do more than repeat a few stilted sentences I had rehearsed elaborately in my cabin. We often laughed together afterwards about it.

One of the most delightful characteristics of this altogether charming man was his sympathetic instinct for understanding others, which amounted almost to genius. To him there were no secrets in the heart of a child. At sunset time, he asked me to take a walk on the deck. We went up to the bow, and sat together on the big old-fashioned anchor. Much to my astonishment I found myself pouring out the thoughts and interests of my inmost soul to this new-found friend. For the first time in my life, I discovered the thrill of real conversation. He not only had the gift of giving out his own brilliant and humorous thoughts, but he inspired every listener to express his own half-formed ideas in a way which I have never seen equalled.

During the year in which I was privileged to see him two or three times a week, his spell was never broken. We all sat excitedly on the edge of our chairs drinking in every word he said, shouting with laughter, and panting to get our own points of view into circulation.

During this first memorable talk, he said to me, 'Don't look for a minute, I have something wonderful to show you. It is the Southern Cross. I make a prediction that you will have a very interesting and unusual life, and much of it will be under the Southern Cross. I want to be the first person to show it to you. Now turn round, and behold.' I have never since seen the Southern Cross, which was our nightly constellation in different parts of the world for years, without remembering this first wonderful introduction.

The *Mariposa* reached Apia on the 3rd November 1893, and my first glimpse of these beautiful Islands had the additional glamor of Mr Stevenson's vivid imagination and genuine love for place and people. We were instantly adopted by Mrs Stevenson's son and daughter, Lloyd Osbourne and Mrs Strong, as part of their family, and our friendship has lasted without interruption to this day.

It had been the habit of the natives to prepare a great

Samoan feast for Tùsitala (Robert Louis Stevenson's native name) on each November 13th, and it was tactfully explained to me that they might not understand that I was sole possessor of the birthday, so we should share the honours for once. The birthday feast was served at noon on big banana leaves spread on the lawn. About one hundred people sat down cross-legged in Samoan fashion, mostly natives, with a sprinkling of whites,—Mr Stevenson's mother wore her black silk dress and starched cap with long streamers, to which she clung persistently, in spite of the tropical climate. We all ate with our fingers in native style, a tribute to our Samoan hosts' sensibilities, and a custom which they observe with elegance and dignity.

Tusitala and I waited until all the guests were seated, walked out arm in arm, and sat side by side on leaves on the ground at the head of the long table. There were dozens of whole roast pigs, shrimps, wild pigeons, and Samoan dishes. I was decorated by Tusitala with native necklaces of shells, red seeds and garlands of flowers. We both wore red hibiscus over our ears. It was the proudest moment of my life. The gift of the birthday to me was explained in many speeches in Samoan and English, most of which must have been unintelligible, as among the many beneficent customs of that delightful land, no records of ages are kept. After dinner, the gifts were divided—fine mats, tapa cloth, fans, baskets, etc., were piled before us and I received my share. The high chiefs sat beside us in our post of honor on the steps of the veranda, while songs, written for the occasion, and siva dances kept the celebration going till dark.

We became extremely intimate with the Stevenson family, and dined and lunched back and forth constantly. The house was run on the most hospitable lines, and I recall the brilliant talk, the delicious food over which Mrs Stevenson exercised personal supervision, the old 1840 Madeira, of which I was now and then given a glass in view of my position as name-daughter, and a thousand and one festivities, all delightful memories.

Sometimes we used to dance in the great hall, the music furnished by a hand organ ground out by one of the devoted Samoan retainers, who took a lively and conversational interest in the proceedings. Tusitala himself was by way of being a pupil, and we practiced strange steps, polkas and mazurkas taught by an exiled Austrian Count, and very strenuous lancers engineered by the English midshipmen from the warships in the harbor.

He decided that our education, however, must take some more tangible shape than all these entertainments, and offered to supplement the instructors my father had found for us by giving my elder sister, Adelaide, and me lessons in French. My sister Marjorie, to her secret relief, was deemed too young. As Adelaide had had two years' instruction in French, and my own knowledge of that tongue was limited to 'Parlez-vous Français?' with no answer available, I started with some trepidation. I worked so hard, still retaining a little of my awe of the great man, that I memorized French sentences as I would have so much Hindustani. His quick mind soon discerned this, and he began to skip around in their English equivalents instead of giving them to me in sequence, and I was hopelessly lost. He threw back his head in shouts of laughter, but made me go back and learn it properly. And while I have to confess that I am not a credit to him, still he did make us really study and really learn. He gave us, too, the most amusing exercises. He had an enemy (due to difference in Samoan politics) who was the editor of one of the local papers. It was his delight to give us sentences like the following, to be put into French.

'Blank is a silly ass. Blank hasn't an idea in his fat head. What do you suppose I would do to Blank if I came up behind him?' etc.

On the occasion of a particularly vitriolic editorial against him, Stevenson was led to charge us with having dropped some of his French exercises on our way home which the editor found. When my sister Adelaide left for America, to return to school, she was given a letter to any future instructors saying that she had been under his tuition in French, with equal advantage to both master and pupil.

Mr Stevenson had many sides, all intense, and not the least of these was his religion. He decided that it would be a good example to many of the renegade whites who flocked to the South Seas, for us all to take classes in Sunday School. So he, my sisters and I started in as Sunday School teachers. My own struggles with a row of open-mouthed little half-castes and wriggling brown children were excessively painful, and Tusitala fared little better. One day he confessed himself talked out and looked for a response but, for once, even he failed. Finally, being very tired, a bright idea struck him and he said 'I will give sixpence to the first boy who asks me a question about the lesson.' Stolid silence. Desperately he went on and raised the offer to a shilling. He rose to half-a-crown, when one little youngster raised his hand and in trembling tones inquired 'Who made God?' He said it was worth the half-crown, but ended his career as a missionary.

Quite a different twist of his brain was the love of dramatic detective stories and murder accounts in the newspapers. He liked to figure out the possibilities of innocence or guilt, and weigh the evidence in his own mind.

I remember listening once for three hours while he questioned my father eagerly about every detail of the Lizzie Borden murder, which occurred in Rhode Island and created a great sensation, and the mystery of which was never solved.

In describing my own impressions of Tusitala I doubt if I can add much to those already published by his myriads of friends and admirers. The most poignant memory to me is his eyes, which seemed to blaze in intensity, or twinkle with fun, and to see everything. Nothing escaped that kindly gaze. His remarkable and unceasing cheeriness, and his intense sympathy, were his most prominent characteristics; added, of course, to his vital interest in everything in life and in everybody with whom he came in contact. He never impressed me as being an invalid. I never heard him cough. I never heard him refer to his health, although I have seen Mrs Stevenson frequently move him out of a draught, or put an extra coat over his shoulders, or make him lie down for a few minutes' nap.

On one occasion I was listening, which seems, in these reminiscences, to have been the principal rôle I played, while some local scandal was being discussed. It was in whispers, for my benefit, but I gathered that a woman had some kind of shocking tragedy in her life. I expected a chorus of condemnation, but I distinctly remember being startled, as by something quite novel, when Tusitala exclaimed 'Poor thing, poor thing! I am so sorry for her. I wonder if we could do something for her.' It was a lesson which I have tried never to forget.

We had a second birthday celebration together on the 13th of November, 1894, a duplicate of the first with a papalagi (white people's) dinner in the evening. My sister Marjorie was ill with fever, and Mrs Stevenson came down to help nurse her, and advised taking her to a colder climate. So we made hurried plans to go to New Zealand. The night before we sailed, (and as it turned out three days before his death), Tusitala rode down on horseback to say goodbye to us. Every incident in that day is as vivid in my mind as the events of yesterday. He had on a new riding habit, corduroy breeches, a brown velvet coat such as he always wore, and a fresh white cap. As he walked up the drive our cockatoo was sitting on the rail of the porch, and shouted 'Hello, Cocky!' He instantly exclaimed, 'Now, how did that bird know exactly how I felt in my new suit?'

We sat and talked on the veranda, and I had never seen him more brilliant, more fascinating, and more lovable. My father asked him to stay to dinner: he agreed and spent the whole evening. He told us that for the first time in his life he found writing uphill work; that he had had great difficulty in not being depressed about it, but it sometimes seemed to him that he had done nothing, in spite of all his great dreams. 'After all,' he said 'a few tales for boys is about the sum of my achievement.' This mood was not habitual with him. In fact, it was the only glimpse I ever had of anything of this kind, and must have been, I suppose, a preliminary warning of the end that was to come so soon.

We did not hear of his death for over a month, as there was no cable to Samoa in those days. I broke down and wept bitterly in public when I heard the news. And I wish I could do justice to the great legacy he left me, not only the birthday which has proved a source of so many varied advantages, but also the great good fortune of having been admitted to close friendship and intimacy with this most wonderful man.

A Few Recollections of R. L. Stevenson and his Family in Samoa.

JUDGE E. W. GURR.

CHIEF Justice Henry C. Ide, who was appointed by the then Three Great Powers—The United States, Great Britain and Germany—to be Chief Justice of Samoa, had invited the Stevensons and the Gurrs to dinner. His residence stood on rising ground which sloped down to the road at Motootua, a suburb of Apia. It was then one of the most conspicuous dwelling places in that vicinity and had been built by a good American, David Stout Parker, especially for the home of the first American Chief Justice of Samoa, and it was Parker's boast that the first American Chief Justice occupied his property. Mr and Mrs Stevenson with Mrs Strong (Teuila) had ridden from Vailima in the early part of the evening and were the first guests to arrive and to get settled down. After dark, at about half past seven o'clock, E. W. Gurr, who was then Natives' Attorney, his wife, Fanua, and his sister alighted from their buggy and began to ascend the pathway leading to the Ides' Residence. When nearing the house two figures were reflected on the window blind of the reception room. One figure was undoubtedly that of the Chief Justice, the other was that of a person standing and appearing to 'be laying down the law' and punctuating sentences with the arm and index finger. It looked like that of a woman and I said to Fanua 'I wonder who that can be, it looks like Mrs Bell.' Fanua replied, 'Yes, it does look like Mrs Bell and what can her trouble be to cause her to appear before the Chief Justice at night time and just as he is about to dine?' Now, Mrs Bell was a very respectable school teacher, who, with her husband, had been many years in Samoa conducting an English School, but both were notorious for voluminous language and occasional grievances. Upon reaching the house and being ushered into the reception we naturally looked around to ascertain if Mrs Bell were in the room but the only occupants were Mr Stevenson and the Chief Justice. We concluded that the figure reflected on the curtain was not that of Mrs Bell but that of Mr R. L. Stevenson. Fanua immediately opened out, 'Oh Tusitala, on coming up the road we thought we saw Mrs Bell talking to the Chief Justice, but it was you.' This remark caused some surprise for there was no similarity between the two persons, but what will a silhouette on a window curtain do? Mrs Stevenson and Mrs Strong then entered the room and they were informed that Fanua had been pleased to confer on Tusitala a new name, that of Mrs Bell. This caused much merriment and laughter and became the stock jest of the evening. Mr Stevenson retaliated by calling Fanua Mr Bell, and these names were afterwards frequently referred to especially when either of them wanted to chaff the other.

Fanua was also styled on many other occasions by Mr Stevenson as 'Le Aitu' which designates a visitor from the spirit world, and Fanua in reply would address him by a title assumed by himself when asked if Fanua be an 'Aitu' what then can Mr Stevenson be? Mr Stevenson replied 'A Plain Human Being.'

Both Robert Louis Stevenson and Fanua Eleitino Gurr were great friends from the time of their first meeting till his death, and even unto the time of her death in December 1917 she frequently spoke most lovingly of Mr Stevenson and all the members of his talented family. She was a frequent guest of Vailima. Sometimes for several months at a stretch Fanua and her husband were favored guests of the family and occupied Tusitala's Library. For the gracious and homely bearing of Mrs Margaret Stevenson, mother of Robert Louis Stevenson, Fanua expressed great admiration and would frequently remark during her lifetime that Mrs Margaret Stevenson had a disposition which immediately attracted all Samoans who met her. She was courteous and loving and these spread a magnetic influence towards all near her. Fanua received lessons in English from the mother, together with Austin Strong prior to his departure to New Zealand to school, and there is no doubt that her observations of Mrs Margaret Stevenson's character and attitude had a great deal to do with shaping the future conduct of Fanua. Both deplored scandal and it was common repute that up to the time of her death Fanua had never been known to say a bad word of any other person. Of the practicability of Mrs Robert Louis Stevenson Fanua learned much and she admired the great devotion of Aolele, the wife, to Tusitala.

On the occasion of Fanua's marriage in December 1890 Mr R. L. Stevenson was a guest at the wedding breakfast and he delivered a happy speech. There were also present at this event the British Consul, now Sir Thomas Berry Cusack-Smith, Harold Marsh Sewall, the American Consul-General, and Lieut. John Parker U.S.N., afterwards Governor of American Samoa.

Teuila (Mrs Strong) and Fanua Eleitino Gurr were bosom friends and when Mrs Gurr's daughter was born the whole Stevenson family showed great interest and Mr Stevenson insisted that he should have the right of giving the child a name and it was agreed that her first name should be 'Teuila.'

It was of the home life of the Stevenson family in Samoa that Fanua was wont to talk about with her friends of later years. Like as the chief of a clan in Scotland Mr Robert Louis Stevenson as Tusitala was the 'Matai' or head of his Samoan clan or family. His treatment of the Samoans employed by him was equivalent of the treatment of a Samoan Matai to his followers, and then in addition to his family of employees there were chiefs and chieftainesses included in the family also. Taking in all, Mr Stevenson had quite a large gathering of followers who revered him and extended to him the respect shown to the highest chiefs. Courteousness to all, even to the humblest employee, was Tusitala's attitude. Disputes sometimes happened amongst the Samoans of the household which Lloyd Osbourne and Teuila generally dealt with but occasionally a reference would be made to Tusitala as the 'Matai' and his judgments were always considered fair and readily accepted by the obstinate disputants.

Tusitala, by his usual conduct, not only showed a moral example to the Samoans associated with him, but he even set an example of work by tackling certain physical work himself. On one occasion Fanua had been busy during the day helping the family plant cocoa beans. This was a most interesting and inspiring scene. Tusitala and Fanua were packing the small plaited baskets with good brown rich mould brought in by the 'boys', and these were passed on to Aolele (Mrs R. L. Stevenson) who took up the delicate seeds and after covering them with ashes to help resist the insect raid she would carefully put the seed in the basket of earth with the right side uppermost. Aolele would not allow even Tusitala to handle the seeds and insisted that she alone could do this properly. Then as the work was progressing hot cocoa, with a bountiful supply of milk and sugar, was handed round to everyone employed in order that they may have an idea of the nutritious beverage that can be made from the fruits of the seeds they were engaged in planting.

The gathering of the family after dusk—when the lamps are lit, as expressed by the Samoans—was one of the pleasures of the Vailima household which delighted Fanua. Tusitala would have something to say to them concerning the events of the day and if a mail steamer should have arrived then he would pass on news he had read which was always eagerly sought for by the Samoans. One of the leaders of the Samoans would then suggest time for 'lotu' and a hymn would be sung and then a short prayer. The working members would then depart and the inner circle of the Stevenson family would then indulge in conversation or games until the time for retiring arrived.

I believe that Fanua played against Tusitala in his last game of tennis. I had arrived at Vailima from my office in Apia just before dusk of one of the days when we were stopping at Vailima. Tusitala had been playing rather more vigorously than usual in order to extinguish the 'Aitu.' The game was drawing to a close when Mr Stevenson was compelled to cease playing owing to a hemorrhage starting. Mrs Stevenson then insisted that he should not play tennis any more, and I believe this was his last game, a few months before his death.

VAILIMA MEMORIES, 1892–94.

SIR GRAHAM BALFOUR.

A generation has passed since the death of Stevenson: nearly all the survivors who knew him intimately are old or elderly people. If any further records of him in his habit as he lived are to be snatched from oblivion, there are but few years left, and the Club has done well to focus the lights of memory upon such points of reminiscence as may be worth preserving. Diverse as Stevenson was, there are two main aspects of him which here claim our attention: we may regard him as the writer with varied style and vivid pen or as the personality in which charm and spirit were so attractively blended.

But of the writer there is less need to speak: the written letter is handed down, though its continued life must depend upon its capacity to meet new needs and to take on new meanings. If an author can achieve this, he will appeal to the next and succeeding generations without adventitious help. There is here question only of the slender figure of charm and geniality, at sight of whom all eyes brightened and all hearts leaped and all tongues were loosened. If no personal memories were recorded, Tusitala would leave behind him in the darkening distance only the fading image and the voice so soon becoming inaudible.

Nothing less than a multiplicity of reminiscences can enable our successors to form any definite conception of what he was like or to understand why in his lifetime he appealed to so many of those who came in contact with him.

It was only in the three last years of his life that I knew my cousin, but during that time I had the great good fortune to spend in all more than twelve months in his household and to see Samoa and its people in the light of his experience and interpretation.

In the *Life* I have set down as definitely as possible such characteristic words and actions of Stevenson as I could remember, and the details of his personal appearance and mode of life. There is now little left for me to glean, but perhaps at this distance of time I may speak more freely of recollections and relations personal to myself, however trivial they may be. Among some notes which I wrote for Sir Sidney Colvin in 1895 I find the following paragraph. 'I never actually met Louis until I arrived in Samoa in August 1892. I will not say merely that we were good friends at once: you know how attractive his talk, how irresistible his manner, if his sympathies were engaged or his interest excited. We had common ground in kin and tastes, and in studies both voluntary and compulsory. In a few weeks or even days there seemed to be established between us that complete understanding that rarely comes except from long friendship and old association. It was never put into words, and no record of it exists: it seemed simply to be taken for granted.' The externals of that free and unconventional life appealed to me as by nature. To take the first small incident: I found Louis and the family going barefoot about the house and in the woods of Vailima, and the first afternoon I fell readily into the practice. This reassured them at once, and increased, if possible, the warmth of my welcome: no doubt it had its share in leading to Louis' complimentary explanation: 'He's the same kind of fool that we are.' It was the smallest of episodes, but it opened at once the way to closer understanding. 'It was a wonderful trait of Louis,' the note goes on, 'that emotional and dramatic as he was in some of his actions and relations, towards myself he almost invariably maintained that stoical and Scottish reserve of demeanour and utterance, which we both knew to be in so many ways at variance with our own feelings. It was a streak in his character, one of the minor parts in his list of natural rôles, and he enjoyed playing it, just as he revelled in assuming Braxfield. When I said good-bye to him for the last time, as it proved, in October 1894, in front of Vailima, we parted as if it were but for the absence of a few days.' Yet when I first went away in November 1892, and by the shore was faltering out some inadequate words of thanks for all his companionship and hospitality, I remember the extraordinary and almost reproachful tenderness of his farewell.

So always, if people were neither cruel nor dishonest, whatever their nationality or their colour, were the warmth and charm of his welcome. To Lady Jersey, to captains of men-of-war, to the ex-queen of Hawaii and Samoan chiefs of unparaleled dignity down to the humblest of human creatures he was the same. On the German plantations 'blackboys' were employed, Melanesians from the western Pacific, of low type, quite unaccustomed even to humanity from their masters. Louis always greeted them in passing, and one day the last of a long file who had gone by in silence rewarded him with: 'You good man, you always say "Good morning".' On the other hand I remember riding over to the German overseer's house alone with Louis. 'It is a lovely ride, halfway down our mountain towards Apia, then turn to the right, ford the river, and three miles of solitary grass and cocoa palms, to where the sea beats and the wild wind blows almost unceasingly about the plantation house.' (Letters III. 312.) I always like to think of him as he was that afternoon, enjoying the weather and the exercise with all his faculties and talking his best. As we passed the buildings, a scantily draped, elderly Melanesian woman came out, with ape-like countenance and pendulous breasts. He looked at her and turned to me. 'I deny that I am descended from the same stock as that lady: if I am, I draw out.'

There may some day again be realised the contrast of a home, full of books and pictures and the refinements of housekeeping, and its setting in the midst of a native race and a tropical wilderness of the greatest beauty. But will the inmates ever, day by day, and night by night, share such talk and hear the instalments of such writings as may hardly be found in the world of civilization they have left behind? The talk had its rewards and its dangers. If ever one touched an idea which Stevenson had taken to his heart and made his own, then it received new life and brilliancy as he set it forth in the delight and freshness of his words. I had this good fortune one day in speaking of the soldier who in peace had served until middle age without knowing whether he could rely on his own courage when the moment of danger came. Recent years have made this only too familiar an experience: it was not new then to Stevenson, and his depicting of the crisis was a revelation. Once trivially I quoted a legend, found some years before in an old *Saturday Review*, of a Swiss inn bearing the name of 'Hotel Anglais et Pension God-dam.' I was almost startled at the interest he displayed, until he explained that this was an invention of his own in old days at the Savile Club.

Such talk also had its dangers. Louis was speaking one day of his hope of visiting India and his great desire of seeing the old Danish settlements on the Bay of Bengal. I ventured to suggest the greater beauty and historical attraction of Agra and Delhi, which I had seen the year before, but (perhaps he was even less likely to go so far north) he assailed me and insisted on the superior interest and romantic history of places whose names I have long since forgotten. And another day when I said a word in praise of common sense, I was assailed with a denunciation of its meanness, its lack of imagination and its poverty of spirit, which, even through twenty years of an official career, have ever since caused me rather to distrust that bourgeois rule of life.

But as he himself said of talk: 'The spice of life is battle; the friendliest relations are still a kind of contest; and if we would not forgo all that is valuable in our lot, we must continually face some other person, eye to eye, and wrestle a fall whether in love or enmity.' Of good talk there was abundance, and of 'that amicable counter-assertion of personality which is the gauge of relations and the sport of life.' In that household all gave and took, and there were no scars. The mistress was in vividness and character and warmth of heart the equal of the master, and with full and perfect affection and loyalty to one another they held their own paths. On one occasion a controversy on some line of policy or conduct had run high between them; either of the two in turn appealed subsequently to my judgment, and I was young enough to express my agreement with certain points on either side. The inevitable followed and both fell upon me with indignation, which indeed (though for a different reason) I deserved. But next morning at dawn Stevenson appeared at my bedside with an apology, the generosity of which I have never forgotten.

An instance where Stevenson himself was arbitrator was equally characteristic and may be quoted for entertainment. Once Lloyd Osbourne and I had an argument over the pronunciation of the word 'subaltern' in the sense of subordinate. He was for the accent upon the second syllable, I upon the first, and after a spirited discussion we appealed to Louis. Without hesitation he gave it to Lloyd, and in the same breath declared that everybody else accented the first syllable, and that everybody else was wrong.

As in talk, so in action. Whatever Stevenson did, he did with the utmost zest, and if he could share an experience with anyone who shared his delight, his pleasure was all the greater. Two rides with him stand out among the most intense pleasures of my life; one on the day (28th June 1893) when I induced him to yield to his longing to gallop out and see Mataafa's outposts under arms in the field. 'The impression on our minds was extraordinary; the sight of that picket at the ford, and those ardent, happy faces whirls in my head; the old aboriginal woke in both of us and knickered like a stallion. . . . We were all wet. We had been about five hours in the saddle, mostly riding hard; and we came home like schoolboys, with such a lightness of spirits, and I am sure such a brightness of eye, as you could have lit a candle at!' (Letters IV. 188.) The second was less active. We were riding slowly together down the lane of limes from Vailima towards the coast on one of those mornings following rain, such as Stevenson has described: 'Heaven upon earth for sweetness, freshness, depth upon depth of unimaginable colour, and a huge silence broken only by the far-away murmur of the Pacific and the rich piping of a single bird.' The best company in the world, and scenery and weather unsurpassed. Suddenly the thought came into my mind with a flash: 'This is too good to last,' and before the year was out it was gone by for ever.

For the reasons I gave at the outset, I have preferred to speak of Stevenson in these notes as a man among men, and not as a writer, but I will add here two literary reminiscences.

One day he was talking of style, and ended with: 'I'd like to know who's going to explain the secret of some of Burns's songs,' and he quoted with rapture the two lines—

> 'Yestreen, when to the trembling[*] string
> The dance gaed through the lichtit ha'.'

Another time he was talking of Shakespeare and, as he said, 'the admirable art of *Troilus and Cressida*': he went on to quote some fragments of his favourite speech from *Antony and Cleopatra*—

> 'I am dying, Egypt, dying, . . .
> . . . and do not now basely die,
> Nor cowardly put off my helmet to
> My countryman,—a Roman, by a Roman
> Valiantly vanquished.'

Then he burst out with: 'By God, sir! *That's* the way to write:—if you can only do it.'

So much of my own recollections. But there came to me in France three years ago from my friend, Mr Henry Johnstone, so graphic an account of an episode which he had at first hand from his friend the doctor to whom it happened that I should like to take the opportunity which he kindly allows me of placing it here on record.[†] I give it as far as possible in Mr Johnstone's own words. Dr Peter A. Young of Manor Place, known from his stature as Peter the Great, was a friend of Stevenson, and one day in 1875 in Hanover Street met him walking up the hill from Heriot Row (presumably in Frederick Street), carrying on his head an easy-chair. 'Come, this is rather strong, even for you,' said Young. 'What on earth are you doing?' 'Oh!' said Louis, 'a friend of mine has just come out of the Infirmary; he's had an operation, and he hasn't a chair to sit down upon, and I am taking him one.

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[*] The actual word is *stentit*, (meaning taut, or stretched); but it is often given as 'trembling,' and 'trembling' was the word R. L. S. used.—[Ed.]

[†] See the *Edinburgh Academy Chronicle*, Feb. 1895, p. 39.

And now I come to think of it, he hasn't a doctor either, and I 'll take him one too.' And so saying, he cleiked his arm into Dr Peter's, and took him along with him to pay Young's first visit to W. E. Henley.

SIR JAMES BALFOUR PAUL, C.V.O., LL.D., LYON KING OF ARMS.

A Letter.

DEAR MISS MASSON,—You tell me you are on the quest for any recollections of Louis Stevenson that I can give you. I am afraid these are not many; I have indeed more vivid recollections of his parents than of Louis himself. Tom Stevenson I always thought a delightful person, very able, charmingly quaint and original, and though very religious not in the least the dour Calvinistic Scot some journalists have made him out to be. His mother, 'Maggie Stevenson,' as I always heard her called, was a charming character, so sweet and gentle, with much quiet humour, and altogether very lovable, though there was nothing 'clever' about her.

Although we were second cousins, I never came much in contact with Louis, or 'Smout' as his mother used to call him, after we were quite young boys. One of the latest recollections I have of him as a boy is of an occasion when I drove over from Whitekirk, where I was staying, to North Berwick, where the Stevensons were. In scrambling about the rocks I slipped my foot and fell into a pool and had to be incased in a suit of his father's till mine was dry. It is rather curious that in the only letter I had from Louis after he grew up he alluded to the incident and remembered the very book I had been reading on the way over to him.

This was one of the last letters Louis ever wrote, as it was written only three days before his death. It shows that at this time he was engaged in tracing the

From a photograph taken in 1893 at Sydney.

(Lent by Sir Graham Balfour.)

more remote origin of his family. I append an extract from it, which may perhaps be of interest.

VAILIMA, SAMOA
Dec. 1st 1894.

. . . I am almost ashamed to recall myself to your notice, it is such a bitter long time since we got ducked together on the rocks in front of North Berwick, and you drove over from Whitekirk reading Washington Irving's Mahomet. At the same time I am driven, at the suggestion of Sir Herbert Maxwell, to come before the great Lyon King, like a tinkler's tyke, in a little matter concerning him and me. It is about the name of Stevenson, why, when and to what extent, did the McGregors use that name? Sir Herbert tells me that they have even registered Stevenson arms, or at least the chevron. What truth is there in this? I have a certain amount of direct evidence as to people using both names, but cannot glean one scintilla of evidence as to the wherefore of the thing. If you can throw any light upon it, you will greatly oblige me . . .—Your affectionate cousin,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.*

A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION.

MRS ISOBEL FIELD.

NOT long after Mr Stevenson's death I happened to be in Apia on steamer day when a number of tourists were ashore. One of them, a plain, middle-aged man who looked as though he might have been a steerage passenger, stopped me and asked to be directed to the post office as he wished to buy some Samoan stamps. I pointed out the way and was about to pass on when I caught sight of something that glittered on his coat.

'What is that you are wearing?' I asked, and my eyes filled with tears as he showed it to me. Louis had always worn just such an emblem—the little bronze thistle of the Robert Burns Society. When he changed his riding coat for his velvet jacket, when he dressed for dinner, he never failed to slip the thistle into his button-hole. It was buried with him. The last memory I have of him is lying on the couch in the centre of the big hall at Vailima surrounded by fine mats and masses of bright-coloured flowers, the British flag across his knees and Scotland's emblem on his breast.

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* See p. 238—'Rob Roy Macgregor.'—[ED.]

I not only took the man who had spoken to me to the post office, but I arranged that he should see more of Samoa in the few hours of his stay than the average tourist could in a month. He was introduced to Samoan chiefs, he was welcomed in native houses, he saw flower-bedecked maidens do the *siva*, warriors perform their famous knife-throwing dance; a boy ran up a palm-tree and gathered cocoanuts for him, he took part in a native feast and joined in the *kava* ceremony.

When he was leaving with his arms full of presents: *tapa*, fans, baskets, strings of scarlet seeds and cunningly contrived tortoise-shell finger rings, he was fairly overcome with gratitude. 'How can I ever thank you?' he asked with that burr of the Scottish accent that always thrills me, recalling as it does the memory of a voice I shall never hear again. 'You could not have been kinder to me if I had come with a letter of introduction.'

'You did come with one,' I said. 'It is on your coat—the little bronze thistle of Scotland.'*

I Can Remember Robert Louis Stevenson.

THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF JERSEY.

I was once with a friend on the Palatine Hill in Rome when an archæologist was explaining to us the construction of the Palace of the Cæsars and of the Roman walls.

Suddenly, I forget how, the name of Robert Louis Stevenson was mentioned: the archæologist and I had both known him: instantly antiquity and history faded into mist, and the wand of Tusitala, Teller of Tales, brought back the glow of the Southern Seas, and the enchanter who had wielded it.

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* See p. 240 (2nd par.).—[Ed.]

My friend sighed and I said half-enviously that those who had known Stevenson seemed to possess in common something denied to others. This is true;—he had, beyond any man or woman whom I have met, the singular power of attracting to himself those with whom he became acquainted and of leaving with them a memory never to be lost. They feel unconsciously that they have known not only a writer of romances, but a hero of romance, and that whatever of the dull routine of life they may afterwards encounter they can recal those happy hours when they were for a time permitted to dwell with him in fairyland.

AN ECHO.

SIR JAMES M. BARRIE, O.M.

AS I never saw Stevenson face to face I have no right to be in this volume; but I should like to step into some obscure corner of it so that I may cheer and cheer as the procession of him goes by. Such a fine array of flag-bearers, Colvin, Gosse, Archer, Lady Colvin and many another, the much loved Colvin always to be thought of first—I should forget to couple Mary Lamb with Charles as soon as think of R. L. S. without taking off my hat to Sidney Colvin. Even now when you sit with Colvin you feel that Stevenson is nearer than in any other mortal room; some very slight disturbance of the atmosphere and he would break into the conversation.

When I came to London there was a blank spot in it; Stevenson had gone. It could not be filled till he came back, and he never came back. I saw it again in

Edinburgh the other day. It is not necessarily that he was the greatest, I don't think he was the greatest, but of the men we might have seen he is the one we would like best to come back.

Had he lived another year I should have seen him. All plans arranged for a visit to Vailima, 'to settle on those shores for ever,' he wrote, or something to that effect, 'and if my wife likes you what a time you will have, and if she does not, how I shall pity you.'

There is some waterfall at the top of which I was to sit, let go, and in a second or two come to my senses in a glassy pool. I was warned that the natives would not think much of my works until I had done that. I can't think I should have done it, but there is no telling if he had been there to bid me let go. I was elaborating a scheme for taking him by surprise, explaining a rakish craft that bore him off in the night and made him walk the plank, when the news came that he had gone up the hill behind Vailima for the last time.

THE END.

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